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LD261222 [Editorial Report]

'Arafat-Al-Asad Talks

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad received PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat 25 April, Damascus radio reported, noting that the talks focused on the "popular uprising against the Israeli occupation" and the "importance of supporting it." The meeting was also attended by Salah Khalaf, Faruq Qaddumi, Hani al-Hasan, and several other Fatah officials. The talks followed an earlier meeting between Al-Asad and Libyan envoy Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, who had accompanied 'Arafat on his flight to Syria the previous day.

The radio also disclosed that Al-Asad held a telephone conversation with Jordanian King Husayn before his talks with the PLO leader. 'Arafat subsequently left Syria to start a tour of Gulf countries 26 April, APS reported. A Palestinian source cited by the agency quoted 'Arafat as saying that the discussion with Al-Asad was "positive and cordial."

'Arafat presided over several Palestinian meetings in Damascus before his talks with President al-Asad, KUNA noted. The Palestinian talks were attended by leaders of Fatah, the DFLP, PFLP, and the Palestine Liberation Front. According to Radio Monte Carlo, the Palestinian leaders agreed that the uprising in the territories offers a wide area for agreement with Syria, and that the basis for supporting it centers on the Syrian-Palestinian alliance.

On the issue of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah said the Palestinians only want to protect themselves and "the right to fight the enemy." He also said the PLO leaders are willing to hold a "direct and immediate dialogue" with the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF), whose leaders are based in Syria.

PNSF leaders had earlier held talks in Damascus with Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, Radio Monte Carlo noted. Meanwhile, the clandestine Al-Quds Palestinian Arab radio broadcast a 15 April speech by PFLP-GC leader Ahmad Jibril, one of the PNSF leaders, in which he denounced the idea of Palestinian-Israeli "mutual recognition" and affirmed that a dialogue between different Palestinian sides should be based on the 1968 PLO Charter.

In Israel, sources in Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's office claimed that the PLO-Syrian rapprochement and other "extremist" trends are the result of the Shultz plan, IDF radio reported. Shamir himself said the "blooming romance" between 'Arafat and Al-Asad does not surprise Israel, but he warned that it could lead to further "radicalization" of the Arabs against Israel, according to Jerusalem radio. In contrast, KUNA reported the Kuwaiti foreign minister's remark that he was "deeply delighted" by the Syrian-PLO rapprochement, and PETRA-JNA cited a statement by the Jordanian information minister welcoming the Syrian-PLO talks. Egypt also "welcomes Palestinian-Syrian coordination," an Egyptian Foreign Ministry official noted in a statement carried by MENA.

Israel

The Jerusalem Special Court sentenced John Demjanjuk, identified as "Ivan the Terrible" of Treblinka, to death, Jerusalem radio reported. The president of the court noted that Demjanjuk's appeal to the Supreme Court is automatic, the radio added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shamir called for "punitive measures" to be taken against U.S. journalists whose reportage on PLO official Khalil al-Wazir's murder violated censorship regulations, Jerusalem radio reported. Their expulsion from Israel may not be appropriate, he said, but they must be punished.

On relations with the USSR, HADASHOT reported that Knesset member Dan Meridor has met a senior Soviet official in Vienna, where he conveyed an invitation to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to visit Israel during his tour of the Middle East. According to YEDI'OT AHARONOT, following EEC meetings in Brussels, a Foreign Ministry official will hold "clandestine" talks with Soviet and Egyptian representatives to promote the Shultz plan.

On the security situation, a lone "terrorist" in a boat was killed by the navy off the coast of Sidon, IDF radio reported. In East Jerusalem, police detained 14 shopowners who opened their stores in defiance of closure orders, IDF radio reported. The Civilian Administration in Gaza has forbidden several dozen residents suspected of incitement and participation in disturbances from travelling inside Israel, according to Jerusalem radio. The Gazans have been issued special ID cards and must report to the district police headuarters twice a day.

Military sources cited by THE JERUSALEM POST rebutted reports that a 60-year-old Palestinian woman died of tear-gas inhalation after a 24 April clash near Hebron, claiming she died of natural causes. A military medical officer also termed "incorrect" a civilian doctor's findings that tear gas used by the IDF has caused at least 30 miscarriages in Gaza, MA'ARIV reported.

Tunisia and the Al-Wazir Assassination

Tunisia's "victory" at the UN Security Council is a "rehabilitation" of the United Nations and emphasizes the commitment of the international public to "justice and right," Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali declared in remarks broadcast by Tunis radio. Ben Ali

was hailing the Security Council resolution which condemned the "aggression" against Tunisian territory on 16 April during which Khalil al-Wazir was assassinated.

In a related development, the radio disclosed that two of the three Lebanese passports used by the assassins' gang have been traced to Israel. Lebanese security authorities have informed Tunisia that one of the passports was confiscated by the Israelis from a Lebanese sailor in 1984, while the other was seized during an IDF raid on a Lebanese village in 1985.

Libya

An Armed Forces announcement cited by Tripoli television warned all military personnel currently "absent or deserting" to rejoin their units by 1 May at the latest in view of the "continuous U.S. and imperialist threats" against Libya. Anyone who fails to rejoin his unit by this date will be brought before a military court and punished in accordance with the military code, the report added.

Gulf Conflict

Iran "strongly protested" the UK's support for the U.S. attack on Iranian oil installations in the Persian Gulf, IRNA reported. The protest delivered by the Iranian charge d'affaires in London followed one passed through the Swedish Embassy in Tehran, according to a British Foreign Office spokesman cited by IRNA.

Regarding the Iran-Iraq conflict, the Iraqi Military Industries Organization successfully tested a 900-km-range "Al-Husayn" class missile 25 April, INA reported. The enhanced range "Al-'Abbas" missile struck a target 860 km away in the test, the agency noted.

Afghanistan

A presidential decree broadcast by Kabul radio announced widespread promotions among top military commanders, including the elevation of the defense minister and chief of staff to the rank of lieutenant general. The communications minister, PDPA Army section chief, and 7 brigadier generals were promoted to major general, while 42 brigadiers were made brigadier generals.

Palestinian Affairs

Hawatimah on PLO-Syria Ties, USSR Role

JN251038 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah has said that the decision to reconcile Syria and the PLO will produce significant political results and a new map of alliances in the Middle East.

In a statement published in AL-ITTIHAD today, Hawatimah said establishing relations between Syria and the PLO constitutes a cornerstone in the confrontation of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' plans and support for the popular uprising in the occupied territory.

Hawatimah noted that the USSR played a major and important role in achieving reconciliation between the PLO and Syria to confront the Zionist occupation, to achieve the rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab countries to regain their occupied land, and to besiege Shultz' plan.

PLO's Salah Khalaf on Palestinian, Arab Issues

JN222014 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1734 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Telephone interview with Salah Khalaf, Fatah Central Committee member, identified by his nom de guerre Abu Iyad, by News Director Antoine Nawfal and carried within the "It Happened Tomorrow" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Nawfal] After greeting you Abu Iyad, allow me to ask you: Who is responsible for protecting Palestinian leaders?

[Khalaf] For the past 20 years, we have agreed that in view of the fact these leaders do not gather in one place but in different places, each leader should take measures to protect himself in consultation with the central security apparatus. As for Brother Abu Jihad, his basic post was in Baghdad and therefore, his visits to Tunis were brief. [passage indistinct]

[Nawfal] What about the role of preventive security [al-amn al-wiqa'i] in such cases?

[Khalaf] Everything related to the central security apparatus is of secondary consideration compared to the leader's own arrangements.

[Nawfal] The issue of the safety of Palestinian leaders will occupy a large part of our conversation. What are the indications resulting from Abu Jihad's assassination? I am sorry to ask the question: Has the process of liquidating the Palestinian leaders at home and abroad started?

[Khalaf] I believe the popular uprising in our occupied territory and some recent operations provoked [words indistinct]. Therefore, there is an Israeli political decision on the highest level, that is, by Shamir and his aides from the Likud and the Labor Party.

The decision was that the basic Palestinian leaders who have been behind the uprising should be liquidated so their asassination would be the beginning of the end for this popular uprising which has placed Israel in an impasse.

Therefore, the martyrdom of Abu Jihad has shown that the Israeli impasse reached the point of desperation. Therefore, they started to act recklessly. They would do anything to stop this powerful uprising in the occupied territory. They thought that by killing Palestinian leaders the process of ending this uprising would begin.

[Nawfal] Allow me to ask a somewhat long question. 'Ezer Weizman clearly hinted that Israel was behind the assassination of Abu Jihad. A French reporter is now writing an imaginary political story on the Middle East. The story begins with a meeting between Abu Iyad and the chief of the Israeli Mosad.

I do not know who the Mosad chief is and I do not know if you know him. But, and we are still discussing an imaginary thing, do you know who assassinated Abu Jihad?

[Khalaf] First of all, I am certain the decision to assassinate Abu Jihad was a political one made by Shamir, Rabin, and Peres. I am convinced of it. I am also certain that the Israeli Mosad, in cooperation with other special Israeli units, which have relations with what they call terrorism, carried out the operation after 4 or 5 months of preparation. I am convinced of it.

As for what I might say to the Mosad chief, I would say he has succeeded technically and in implementing the operation. But the (results?) of this operation will be much more than he or his masters have considered.

This will not terrify the Palestinian people or the Arab people. It will increase the determination of the Palestinian people to continue fighting for the sake of their national rights.

Therefore, I can tell the Mosad chief: You have succeeded in form, but in effect you have failed because the assassination of Abu Jihad will create a thousand, a million Abu Jihads in the occupied territory and everywhere.

[Nawfal] Will you tell him that you will play the game of balance of terror and will mount other operations? Perhaps he will ask you this question.

[Khalaf] When I say he succeeded in form but failed in substance, I mean all these things.

[Nawfal]: So there will be a Palestinian response?

[Khalaf]: I think our true response will be inside the occupied land.

[Nawfal]: But, Abu Iyad, you said in the wake of Arab Jihad's killing that the PLO will not allow itself to be dragged into terrorist operations abroad. Nevertheless many people now wonder how you will be able to secure your personal safety.

[Khalaf]: I think that following in the footsteps of Abu Jihad in going all out on the road of escalating the uprising in the occupied land is a key response to his killing.

But there are other reactions inside the occupied land. [Words indistinct] as for outside operations, Israel has for the past 2 years been seeking to drag us into this kind of activity to give [word indistinct] for the PLO.

We have succeeded in removing this image from European and world public opinion and we will not restore it even if they did more than what they have done [words indistinct].

As for the interior, there is much room for action. I think the murder of Abu Jihad will open up many horizons either related to the uprising or military action in the occupied land.

[Nawfal]: An increase of such operations will without a doubt have an impact on Palestinian bases. How is this being handled internally?

[Khalaf]: I think the [words indistinct] for Israel. We do not fear martyrdom. It is true our people are calling upon us to be better prepared for such treacherous actions.

It is also true our people are urging vengeance. But the question is where to direct our response and vengeance. I think it is important that the uprising continue and our people carry it forward.

This is because the uprising will take us to independence and the Palestinian state. Military action will go hand in hand with the uprising. Military action will not stop and there will be a response to all treacherous actions by Israel and its cadres both inside the occupied land and outside.

[Nawfal]: It is widely believed that Abu Jihad meant everthing in terms of armed struggle in the occupied land. How are you going to handle the succession and what role can you play personally?

[Khalaf]: As a matter of fact Abu Jihad amounted to much inside the revolution. But in contrast to previous revolutions this is not one of persons. Take 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni for example. [passage indistinct]

But the falling of a leader does not spell the end of the revolution and that it must look for [word indistinct]. Far from it. I believe other leaders will emerge and pursue the same course.

It is not a question of persons. A good many people can take the same route and do the same thing. If Abu Jihad is irreplaceable, his tranquillity, self-effasiveness, and perseverance do not preclude the emergence of hundreds of his caliber. As far as I am personally concerned, I am just a soldier in this leadership and as such am available for whatever task may be entrusted to me. [Nawfal] Many have seen in the funeral and burial of Abu Jihad in Syria an opportunity to restore normal relations between the organization and Damascus. Until the last moment, rumors had it that the Palestinian leadership, headed by Yasir 'Arafat, would head for Damascus. Afterward, 'Arafat headed for Libya. From there contacts were held with Damascus.

Rumors continued and nothing happened. In your opinion, which is very important because you are considered one of the engineers, or, rather, the engineer of restoring relations with Damascus. Why did this happen?

[Khalaf] When we decided to bury the martyr's body outside Tunisia, there were many invitations to bury the martyr from more than one Arab country. There were invitations from the two Yemens, Algeria, Amman, and Damascus.

Actually, the idea was that this revolution stemmed from Damascus. Abu Jihad lived in Damascus for a long time. The political choice was Damascus. When we thought of who would accompany the funeral, we thought of only one thing; namely, that many delegations should be there, including a Palestinian delegation headed by Abu Jihad [as heard] and the funeral be headed by the members of the Central Committee and the PLO Executive Committee.

As for Brother Abu 'Ammar, we thought that the issue is not that of a funeral and that he should not enter Damascus with the funeral of Abu Jihad. Rather, an invitation for Abu 'Ammar must be confirmed so he would go to Damascus in a natural manner after this long rupture.

What happened was that our brothers in Damascus said the invitation is for everyone, without specification. Meanwhile, an invitation was received from Colonel al-Qadhdhafi to visit Tripoli without a connection between the funeral and this inviatation.

Since Brother Abu 'Ammar has been to Tripoli for more than 6 years, this invitation was accepted to discuss the issue of Palestinian-Syrian relations there and the funeral of martyr Abu Jihad.

[Words indistinct] Brother Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhdafi and some Algerian brothers thought the issue of relations with Damascus should be handled after the funeral, not before it. This is the whole matter. All rumors which were spread afterward were incorrect.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, away from rumors, I would like you to hear this comment which was carried by Damascus radio. The radio affirmed on Wednesday, the day of the funeral, that Syria has no personal differences with anyone and that it behaves according to its political stands.

Without mentioning PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by name, the radio pointed out Syria has no personal differences with anyone, but makes decisions in light of its principled stands. The radio added:

To establish good relations with Damascus, [one] must struggle for the sake of the Palestinian people's national rights and the liberation of the occupied territories and must reject all capitulatory plans which encourage U.S.-Israeli domination of the Arab world.

This is double-edged talk. Do you not agree with me?

[Khalaf] This talk is not unusual to us. It is being repeated constantly. However, I personally believe there has never been disagreement over these slogans [words indistinct].

However, there are some details pertaining to the independence of our decisionmaking and general orientations [words indistinct] with the brothers in Syria. As for general political principles, there has never been a disagreement between us and Syria at any time.

As for the Syrian radio's comment you have mentioned, I do not think there is anyone who doubts that this revolution and its leader the Fatah movement can disagree over this [word indistinct].

Otherwise, why are thousands of martyrs falling? Why are leaders falling? Are they falling for a capitulationist and liquidatory solution? I believe Abu Jihad's blood must be more valuable than words.

Therefore, I and all my brothers believe there is not and never has been a disagreement with Syria on these principles. There is a disagreement over details.

These details cannot be solved through radios, speeches, or major addresses. Rather, they should be solved through direct, regular metings during which details can be discussed and agreement reached.

I am confident that Abu Jihad's blood and that what happened in Damascus yesterday was a consensus, that what happened in the past was a major mistake, and that the Syrian and Palestinian people want a sound relationship between the PLO and [words indistinct].

This is the correct approach which the Syrian, Palestinian, and all Arab masses desire. After all this precious blood has been shed, let us not compete with slogans.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad: Let us talk clearly about diplomacy. The story of the Palestinian reconciliation may have taken longer than the actual Syrian-Palestinian dispute. [sentence as heard]

We know that since last summer letters have been exchanged between the Syrian and Palestinian leaderships. You personally were optimistic and you were preparing and announcing you would soon go to Damascus.

This took place before the assassination of Abu Jihad. What has happened and why has the visit not taken place?

[Khalaf] As I said, [words indistinct] in the presence of Brother Ahmed Talab Ibrahimi. It was a lengthy meeting, during which we discussed all issues. I believe it was [words indistinct] and the tactics of the daily work.

The question of why there was no invitation should be posed to our brothers in Damascus and not to me. As I understood after the meeting, there was an invitation for the the Central Committee to visit Damascus.

However, I believe Syrian-Palestinian relations are inter-Arab relations and have all the characteristics of Arab relations: either complete love or complete hatred. I hope we can go beyond infatuation and start a clear political relationship.

[Nawfal] But if Abu Jihad's blood does not succeed in achieving Syrian-Palestinian reconcilation, how can you succeed by posing questions and receiving answers?

[Khalaf] [Words indistinct] the Syrian-Palestinian relations started after the meeting and before the death of Al-Wazir. Syria's position on the PLO is good. More than one official statement was issued that an effective international conference will convene only if an Arab delegation, including the PLO, is allowed to attend it.

During official visits, the Syrians also insisted on national Palestinian rights, including the Palestinian right to self-determiantion and the establishment of an independent state. We did not hear such things 5 years ago [words indistinct]

[Nawfal] Undoubtedly, relations with Syria remain a basic demand. But some developments in the area may change the tactics. One of these developments is the restoration of the Al-Faw Peninusla by Iraq. We know the Iraqi-Iranian war has a place in Palestinian strategy. It also has its direct effects on Palestinian-Arab relations. What do you say?

[Khalaf] We felt happy when we hard that the heroic Iraqi Army regained Al-Faw. We do not want to relinquish any Arab land. Arab land occupied by Israel in Palestine, southern Lebanon, or Syria are like the Arab lands occupied by the Iranians. Therefore, the Iraqi

Army's victory in regaining Al-Faw was a victory for us. We believe it was a very important strategic step because Iraq has started to move from the defensive to the offensive.

Every Iraqi victory is a victory for us. This war benefits only Israel and its supporters. From this angle, we hail this strategic battle waged by the Iraqi Army. We also consider it a turning point for Iraqi military policy [words indistinct].

[Nawfal] Following the strategic victory and the move from the defensive to the offensive, are you considering moving to Baghdad, Abu Iyad?

[Khalaf] We are not considering changing our location at present. We do maintain a presence in Baghdad. We will never forget what Baghdad has given to us, for Baghdad has given us at a time it was fighting a war what many others could not give us during times of peace.

[Nawfal] We mean the leaders who are a target, Abu Iyad.

[Khalaf] Be sure that we must not panic. Abu Jihad's murder is not the end of history. They have been pursuing us for 25 years and in these 25 years they succeeded in killing one important leader. However, you must realize they also live in fear while we do not live in such fear. We have proudly undertaken martyrdom and we will continue (?along our path). We will never panic.

We will maintain a presence in Baghdad, Tunisia, Algeria, Yemen, and wherever we may be. Be confident that our people know that we draw our strength from them. Our people are brave, a fighting people. They are confronting the military machine in the occupied territory, in all the occupied territory. The leaders of such a people cannot but be brave and fight. We shall do all that this people ask of us. There will be no disappearance.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, a word about relations with Egypt. Then we turn to Lebanon. Is there anything new in relations between the PLO and Egypt? How far have President Mubarak's efforts for an international peace conference gone?

[Khalaf] Relations with the brothers in Egypt are (?relations of cooperation). Relations are maintained and contacts are continuing. We hope our brothers in Egypt and among the Egyptian leadership [words indistinct] (?in the face of what is happening) in the occupied territory and in the face of such [word indistinct] adopt a (?stronger) stand. These are our hopes. It is not [word indistinct] for sister Egypt to issue a statement following Abu Jihad's assassination condemning the matter. That is not what Egypt's stand should be.

[Nawfal] What should it be?

[Khalaf] I believe Abu Jihad's martyrdom was sufficient reason for at least expelling the Israeli ambassador in Egypt. That is my honest view, for I love Egypt and I want Egypt's stand to be the same courageous stand to which we are accustomed. It is not right to [merely] issue a statement following Abu Jihad's martyrdom. There has to be a stand—at least to expel the Israeli ambassador who is living among the Egyptian people.

[Nawfal] To talk about Palestinian-Lebanese relations, one must pass through Damascus—not because of reasons of sovereignty or lack of it, but because as we have said it is Damascus that has reduced the pressure on the refugee camps. What is the situation of the Palestinians in Lebanon now?

[Khalaf] [Passage distinct] I believe the situation is calm, although there are [words indistinct]. They have been fighting for 3 years. Therefore I believe [words indistinct] who have suffered for 3 years or more [words indistinct] or anything that enables people within the refugee camps to feel that they are living like human beings. As for life in general in Lebanon it is [words indistinct]

[Nawfal] What about the relationship with Lebanese legitimacy? Everyone knows that you personally preserve relations inside Lebanon. Lebanon will hold presidential elections soon and each party will have a share in these elections. In whose interest you will employ the Palestinian share?

[Khalaf] First, as you have mentioned, I have had relations with President al-Jumayyil before and after he became the president of the Republic. On this occasion, I would like to thank him through your radio for contacting us to offer condolences on Brother Abu Jihad and for [words indistinct] which represent all the Lebanese people on the uprising in the occupied territory and on his feelings toward us as people and leaders.

You know of the good relationship that links us to Lebanon. However, the situation in Lebanon and its story are very long. Arab and international interests are interlinked. The Lebanese crisis and ordeal resemble to a great extent our Palestinian people's ordeal. The Lebanese is a refugee, the Palestinian is a refugee, and some Arabs are also refugees.

Hence, I hope the coming Lebaense presidential elections will meet the Lebanese people's desires and that the coming president will be capable of uniting the Lebanese people, although I know there is Arab and international interference in this issue. As much as possible, the Lebanese people should have [words indistinct] in electing the new president.

For our part, I cannot claim we have a big share in the issue of Lebanese elections. Others are in charge of this issue. However, we honestly hope the new president will restore to this beloved country, Lebanon, its unity and

stability. We will be the first to welcome any move by the new president and the new leadership in Lebanon to restore Lebanon's unity and stability.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, very important events took place in southern Lebanon, where many Palestinian camps are located. The Amal Movement pushed Hizballah militias away from many important and strategic positions in the south. Will the new situation in the south be reflected on the Palestinian situation and do you believe this battle falls within the preparations for the elections or within the framework of the ongoing deals or Arab and international satements on the Lebanese crisis?

[Khalaf] [Answer indistinct]

[Nawfal] Because of the uprising, Israel deported a number of Palestinian citizens to the border strip. What do you say to the Lebanese who are worried about the issue of settling?

[Khalaf] [Passage indistinct] All Lebanese praised the uprising. [Words indistinct] I hope this will be understood. The deportation is not by our will but by the will of the fascist, Nazi occupation. More than one UN resolution has been issued calling for the return of the deportees. We want to return to Palestine. We do not want to settle in Lebanon, Damascus, Tunis, or any Arab country. We wnat to return to our country. As I told you, the bloodshed is a sign of our return.

There should be one Arab stand on this issue. [passage indistinct] The deportees will try by all means to return to their homeland. [passage indistinct] It is easy for Israel to deport Palestinians to Lebanon. There should be condemnation so this arena will not be used for deportation. [passage indistinct]

[Nawfal] We now move with Abu Iyad to the occupied territories. To reach the occupied territories, we have to talk about Jordan, about relations with Jordan. As we said, Jordan has no conditions on Palestinian participation in the international peace conference. How do you view this stand, which enjoys all characteristics of flexibility?

[Khalaf] There is nothing new in our relations with Jordan. Our relations are normal. There are always meetings and consultations, particularly after the uprising. I believe the six points endorsed by the Jordanian Government represent a (?new) spirit because sometimes we were worried about the issue of Palestinian representation and the right to self-determination. The six points reiterated that the PLO should take part in the conference through an independent or a (?joint) delegation.

The six points noted the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. This clarity in the Jordanian stand makes our stand closer to them. We have no reservations on open relations with Jordan, particularly since the future of the Palestinian state, after its establsihment, God willing, will be a confederation as approved by the PNC in Algeria. Hence, we believe the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is proceeding on the right path.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, everybody agrees the uprising has given the PLO a big political card. But, there are two currents in the uprising: One calls for collecting its fruits before it is too late and the other says let it continue—and I heard you a few moments ago saying that is continuing—so its size will be greater and consequently the PLO's size will be greater. Which current are you in?

[Khalaf] I believe the two currents exist outside the occupied territory. I also believe that the uprising inside the occupied territory has one stand only, that is, the continuation of the uprising until we establish an independent state on our soil with Jerusalem as its capital, God willing. Any retreat from this national political line means the cause will go back 20 years or more. [passage indistinct]

The uprising should continue until we reach national independence. [passage indistinct] I say the uprising will continue until victory. I am with the continuation of the uprising until we achieve national independence, the Palestinian state, and the peace sought by all friends in the world.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, the uprising has restored international awareness of the Palestinian issue and its danger to the situation in the region. But are you not afraid Israel and world public opinion may get used to this situation—namely, bullets against stones—with the result that the Palestinian is the victim?

[Khalaf] First, our followup of the uprising affirms this uprising has (?many) stages within an intelligent plan that knows where it is going. The routine implied in your question is doomed to end through the stages. The next stage will be different from the preceding one. I do not want to talk about these stages, but I am sure there are many stages to this uprising, especially [words indistinct]. Whatever measures Israel takes, it is true they have their effect, and we do not deny this, but they do not affect the essence of this uprising.

[Nawfal] What will the next stage be?

[Khalaf] I believe we better let the stages speak for themselves. However, the next stage will witness widescale strikes, which will be the initial road to civil disobedience, which will [words indistinct]

[Nawfal] What about armed struggle? Is it an ultimate aim?

[Khalaf] Armed struggle is not an end in itself. We seek peace. We want a Palestinian state for our people. If this is achieved—whether we receive a promise to achieve this through an effective international conference to be attended by the PLO—armed struggle, for us, is not an end in itself; it is a means for achieving our national

rights. But an enemy fighting us with arms msut be faced with arms. The gun must not be put down until this enemy accepts sitting with us and negotiating with the Palestinian people in an international conference.

[Nawfal] Now we get to the final page of this program, which we will dedicate to your international relations. First the Untied States. How do you judge the Shultz plan? Has it been buried or will it be revitalized? Has this plan strengthened or confused Palestinian-Arab relations?

[Khalaf] I think that the United States always misjudges things. Despite the fact that its policy is based on alternatives, when it comes to the Palestinian issue and the interim protection of this issues, the United States does not behave in accordance with these alternatives. Its Middle East policy is unchanged. Take, for example, the Shultz plan. First we welcomed the U.S. move and considered it positive as it came after a long period of stagnation and after the [word indistinct] refused to discuss any subject that concerns the Middle East in the international Christian meeting.

We therefore considered the move in itself postive. But what has happened to this move? (?The Shultz plan) does not mention the PLO nor does it mention Palestinian national rights. It does not mention anything about an effective conference. It only talks about direct negotiations and [word indistinct] the elusive enemy, which does not know [words indistinct]. Our objection to Shultz' plan was that it excluded the main factor in the Middle East, that is, the Palestinian people and their organization. This was the reason for our objection to Shultz' plan. I do not think this plan was anything new. I consider it [words indistinct]

[Nawfal] Relations with the Soviet Union are good and at the same time they do not lack some nuisances. Up to now, you have a special reading of a TASS report on the need for Palestinian recognition of Israel. The Soviets, on the other hand, have their own reading. Will you explain this a little?

[Khalaf] Let me describe what happened uring the meetings [words indistinct]. What happened in the meetings was a talk about the possiblity of convening an effective international conference to handle and solve the Middle East issue. This assessment was related to the current uprising in our occupied territories. We agreed an effective international conference [words indistinct]. But the Soviets are of the opinion that these two resolutions [UN Security Council Resolutions Nos 242 and 338] alone are not enough, for the Palestinian right to self-determiantion must be recognized withn or besides these two resolutions.

This is the first of the Soviet stands. The other point concerns representation. It has been decided the PLO must be invited either through an independent delegation or through an Arab delegation. This is the part that concerns us. This, requires dues on our part. We must admit these dues require that this state exist beside another state in the region [passage indistinct]. The talks, therefore, were [words indistinct] recognition of Israel. That is, if a Palestinian state is established, then this subject [words indistinct].

TASS reported all these (?talks plus) the paragraph, but corrected this in later cables and showed this paragraph came within the talk about the right to self-determination and the establishment of the Palestinian state. As I told you, [words indistinct] this matter realistically, as one does not live only in dreams.

[Nawfal] However, Abu Iyad, do you not believe that TASS reflects the official Soviet view? What is the Palestinian leadership's assessment of the Gorbachev era and the approach to the Palestine question?

[Khalaf] My respect for the TASS reports notwithstanding, I am interested in what actually took place in the talks. What interests me is what was agreed upon. Nevertheless, the second and third TASS dispatches were interpreted as statements by Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] and statements by myself denying the Soviet Union asked us to recognize Israel in a separate context from the one I have mentioned.

With regard to Gorbachev, I believe Gorbachev represents a new era in the Soviet Union, a realistic era in tackling problems. Such realism was seen when he tackled the Afghan issue with complete objectivity and insisted on the withdrawal of Soviet forces regardless of whether the other parties sign the Geneva agreement or not. I really like such an objective policy. I believe it is a new beginning, a new policy in the Soviet Union. Also Gorbachev does not believe in red tape and the [words indistinct] which previous Soviet leaders experienced. He is not experiencing such red tape or bureacracy, but he does in fact apply (?the Constitution) rationally. He thinks and then decides.

Consequently, there are no longer (?various possibilities) for a Soviet decision or [word indistinct] for a Soviet decision. I am very optimistic with regard to the Gorbachev era. I believe his move toward detente is not at the expense of principles. The move toward detente is governed by the consideration that peace as a world issue is the basis of the Soviet Union's relations with all other states. We are optimistic about the Gorbachev-Reagan meeting on the basis that it will draw up the outlines of a forthcoming solution to the [words indistinct]. That is what I expect and what (?Gorbachev) expects.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, we have reached the end of this episode of the "It Happened Tomorrow" program. One last question on the release of the hostages of the Kuwaiti airliner. There is great satisfaction with the steadfast Kuwaiti stand as Kuwait did not conclude any deal with the hijackers. However, apparently a deal does exist, a non-Kuwaiti deal. Is that your view also? What could such a deal be?

[Khalaf] Let us say at first that the criminal incident is an act of piracy that must be deleted from our Arabic dictionary. The hijacking of the plane was a farce on national and regional levels and on the level of our Palestinian cause. News of the hijacked plane and the pirates who hijacked it overshadowed news of many aspects of the uprising. We condemn the incident, we condemn the hijackers, and we condemn the side that directed them to carry out such a criminal act that has harmed our reputation as Arabs. [Words indistinct] all Israelis [words indistinct]. Truly, it was a terrible tragedy. All of us must seek to prevent its repetition [words indistinct].

It is a criminal act and, frankly, Iran was behind it. Had it not been for Iran these groups from Lebanon, Iraq, or any other place would not have been able to carry out such a criminal act against our people and our Arab nation. Arab youths must not be misled into carrying out operations on behalf of Iran or any other side and thus harm our Arab and international reputation. However, I firmly believe that [words indistinct] they acted with rare courage for a small country that has borne such great pressure and yet stood firm and proud.

I salute Kuwait for its steadfastness. I believe it should be an example for bigger powers that sometimes conclude deals at the expense of some hostages. We should proudly commend Kuwait for its firmness as that is a basic factor in deterring terrorists who plan to carry out such actions. With regard to deals, I believe the only deal concluded by the hijackers is that they had safe passage after killing innocent people and after harming their international reputation and harming the Arab [words indistinct] during the uprising taking place in the occupied territory. The only deal is that they ensured their safety. There are no other deals.

[Nawfal] Thank you, Abu Iyad, for taking part in this episode of "It Happened Tomorrow" in the first lengthy interview given by a Palestinian official after Abu Jihad's murder.

[Khalaf] Thank you, Antoine.

OPEC Affairs

Algerian Energy Minister on Vienna Talks

LD251851 Vienna OPECNA in English 1040 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 25 Apr, 88 (OPECNA)—Belkacem Nabi, Algerian minister of energy and petrochemical industries, has described the Vienna OPEC/non-OPEC talks as "a really important event" which could well lead to "concrete steps" towards "solidarity between oil producers."

He was talking to OPECNA on arrival here for Tuesday's meeting between the OPEC price committee and seven non-OPEC oil producing countries, Angola, China, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mexico and Oman.

Nabi said it was gratifying that non-OPEC countries had now come round to the OPEC view that oil producers needed to establish cooperation in order to guarantee security of supplies and stabilize oil prices.

"This is what I call evolution of ideas. However, what is important is that we are meeting in Vienna," he added.

The Algerian minister dismissed speculations that if the meeting did not produce "concrete results," it would affect oil prices. "I don't think we should be thinking in those terms at all because the majority of oil producing countries is keen and willing to achieve something at Vienna and that is important."

Asked if he had brought any specific proposals to the meeting, he replied: "I have come with both goodwill and determination to have fruitful consultations in Vienna."

Saudi Minister Arrives in Vienna for Meeting

LD252304 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1755 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 25 Apr (SPA)—His Excellency Hisham Muhyi al-Din Nazir, minister of petroleum and mineral resources and acting minister of planning, arrived in Vienna this evening.

He will attend meetings of the OPEC committee delegated to liaise with non-OPEC member petroleum producing countries, which are to start tomorrow (Tuesday) morning in Vienna.

The meetings of this committee will be attended by the petroleum ministers and the representatives of a number of petroleum exporting countries which are not members of OPEC.

The liaison committee is composed of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Venezuela, Algeria, Nigeria and Indonesia.

His Excellency Hisham Nazir will also attend the OPEC Consultative Council meeting, comprising the 13 member states of the organization, which is to convene next Thursday, 28 April 1988.

The subject of these meetings is expected to be the state of the petroleum market and how to secure its stability.

Algeria

APS Comments on U.S.-Israeli 'Alliance'

LD251845 Algiers APS in English 1057 GMT 25 Apr 88

["The American-Israeli Alliance: The Necessity of an Arab Riposte"—APS headline]

[Text] Algiers, 25 April (APS)—The American-Israeli strategic alliance is reinforced day after day and is materialized mainly in political, military, economic and security fields.

Thus, it is clear that the American Middle East policy and the Israeli policy can not be dissociated.

This is an unavoidable reality given historical facts and proofs accumulated since the creation of the Zionist entity.

The American multiform engagement vis a vis Israel has reached such a point that some were led to consider Israel as the 52nd [as received] state of the Union having the most benefited from central aid than any other American state.

In this context, the USA has just signed a new strategic agreement with Israel, reaffirmed that the Zionist entity is the main ally of Washington after NATO.

By crossing this step—which coincides with the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Zionist entity—the USA reaffirms its attachment to the role it assigned itself during the creation of the Zionist and racist entity in 1948.

The United States committed itself not to undertake any action that will oppose the expansionist aims of Israel.

This commitment was given during the recognition of Israel by the USA by the voice of President Truman himself just after Ben Gurion declared the creation of the Zionist entity. From that time onward, Washington considers Israel as a strategic point of support to the American policy in the Middle East.

Since that date, all American presidents have worked for the reinforcement of American Israeli relations.

The recent American support to Israel constitutes in fact a declaration of war against Arab peoples.

The USA would not have crossed this step if it had known that there would be a firm riposte.

Up till when will the Arab and Muslim peoples remain passive before this American Zionist alliance which is really aggressive for them? The duty must incite Arab leaders to apply the principle of reciprocity because, as it was underlined by President Chadli Bendjedid in his call for the holding of an Arab extraordinary summit to support the Palestinian popular uprising, some countries and big companies, in spite of their interests in the Arab countries continue to support Israel and use Arab capitals.

These Arab capitals which must normally be at the service of less developed Arab countries, are unfortunately in the banks of countries supporting Israel. This is a truth which we, Arab leaders, must take into consideration in our relations with these countries, he pointed out.

Mauritanian Foreign Minister Arrives 24 Apr

LD242117 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Major Mohamed Lemine Ould N'Diayane, Mauritanian minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, arrived in our country today. He is carrying a letter from President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya of Mauritania to President Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and FLN secretary general.

Talks were held today between Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi and his Mauritanian counterpart. They discussed cooperation between Algeria and Mauritania and scope for promoting them. They also reviewed the situation in the Maghreb as well as UN and OAU mediation efforts to find a settlement to the Western Sahara conflict.

The two ministers also examined developments in the Palestinian and Arab situations in light of the popular uprising in the occupied territories. They also discussed the subject of holding an emergency Arab summit in Algiers.

Egypt

Official Welcomes PLO-Syrian 'Rapprochement'

JN260948 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0810 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (WAKH)—Ambassador Taha al-Farnawani, director of the Palestine Department at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, has welcomed the Syrian-Palestinian rapprochement. He said that despite their differences, Syria and the PLO have the same attitude toward liberation of the occupied Arab territories. He affirmed that the PLO has always stressed the importance of cohesion with Syria.

In an exclusive statement to the newspaper AL-KHALIJ published in Al-Shariqah today, Al-Farnawani expressed hope that this rapprochement will be the first step toward healing the Arab rift and promoting cohesion among Arab forces to face the attacks on the Arab nation and its peoples. He called on Arab forces to back and support the popular uprising in the occupied territories, which has proven to be the Arab nation's first line of defense.

On the effect of the Syrian-Palestinian meeting on the proposed settlement initiative in the region, Al-Farnawani said that everyone knows that any political initiative that ignores the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties and forces, will not succeed.

He added that if the United States wants to play a role in any settlement, it must honor Arab demands, just as it demands that the Soviet Union move in favor of the Zionist entity in order for it to have a role in a settlement.

Al-Farnawani denied that the rapprochement might be directed against Egypt. He said that this rapprochement was preceded by PLO assertions of the importance of Egypt and its people to the Palestine question. He said he saw this as confirmation that this rapprochement will have no negative effects on Palestinian-Egyptian relations or Egyptian-Arab relations, but will be a boosting force.

Opposition Leaders Reject Emergency Extension

PM260911 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Apr 88 p 2

['Abd al-Rahman Abu al-'Aynayn report: "Opposition Leader: No Withdrawal From People's Assembly"]

[Excerpts] The city of Al-Zaqaziq has witnessed a unique event. Opposition leaders, namely [Socialist Labor Party leader] Ibrahim Shukri, [Wafd Party leader] Fu'ad Siraj al-Din, [NPUG Secretary General] Khalid Muhyi al-Din, [Liberal Party leader] Mustafa Kamil Murad, and [Ummah Party leader] Ahmad al-Sabahi, have met with its inhabitants on their own turf. It was the second rally by the opposition parties as part of their popular maneuvering seeking to reject the sinister decision to extend the state of emergency for another 3 years.

The rally, which was attended by more than 15,000 citizens, was an epic that silenced all tongues. They showed the popular support for the positions adopted by the opposition.

Ibrahim Shukri, leader of the opposition, delivered a historic speech in which he reaffirmed the major characteristics of the opposition movement for the next phase and explained the Labor Party [SLP] view of various pressing political issues.

Shukri said: The opposition's method during the next phase will be to get down to the grassroots level and enter more election battles, since this is the only method that will force the government to comply with the opinion of the majority.

Shukri sent a message to Mubarak by saying: Mubarak must fully reconsider his calculations. He must abandon the leadership of the NDP.

He pointed out that the alliance's support for Mubarak during the referendum on the Presidency of the Republic was conditional, and that the alliance said no to Mubarak when he extended the emergency law.

Shukri said that the present government is incapable of solving any problem. It was not chosen by the people, and in fact it was imposed on them. That is why there is a gulf between the government and the people.

Ibrahim Shukri then dealt with the most current issues and explained the views of the alliance regarding withdrawal from the People's Assembly and the next local council elections. He said: No withdrawal from the People's Assembly, no withdrawal from the battle for local councils; in fact we will enter more battles.

Shukri explained the alliance's opinion of the regime's silence about [Interior Minister] Zaki Badr's practices. He said: Everyone knows of that minister's attitudes, but they remain silent. Now, the people have no other option but to discipline Zaki Badr themselves. And the people possess enough legitimate means that will enable them to do so. We said no to Mubarak after he approved the extension of the emergency law for a period of 3 years. [passage omitted]

The opposition leader then sent a message to Mubarak urging him to abandon the leadership of the NDP so that it can realize its true size and worth, stating that it consists of a group of people whose interests are intermingled and based on personal gain at the expense of the afflicted and crushed people. He emphasized that the opposition does not belittle the president's status. It just wants to tell him that the Constitution gives him the right to amend it.

Shukri warned that the present government is not capable of solving any problems. The prime minister did not choose the ministers; rather, they were imposed on him. That is why there is a gulf between the people and the government. [passage omitted]

With regard to quitting the People's Assembly in protest against the emergency law, the opposition leader said: Some are urging us to withdraw from the Assembly, but this will not help since we must understand that we are facing a regime the law cannot deter. Our withdrawal would not force any constitutional collapse. In fact, there would be vacant seats, so new elections would be held for Zaki Badr to rig and bring in the people he likes.

But what is the solution to all this? The opposition leader said the correct method, chosen by opposition leaders, is to get down to the grassroot level, mixing with the people and exploring the scene directly. Such a popular gathering will force the government to not think of causing trouble among the opposition parties, since the Muslim Brotherhood will not clash with the NPUG, the Liberal Party will not clash with the Wafd, and the SLP will not clash with the Ummah or others. [passage omitted]

Wafd Party leader Fu'ad Siraj al-Din talked about the emergency law. He said: Democracy suffered a setback when this law was passed at a sinister session by means of swindle, deception, and fraud, for democracy and freedom do not go with emergency laws. [passage omitted]

Siraj al-Din then talked about the so-called impartiality of the regime. He said: Problems have grown worse and suffering has increased since 1981, but the government has not succeeded in solving one single problem, such as housing, for instance. We are now living in the worst era ever. Proof of this is the fact that bribery, deviation, and corruption have become the slogan of the current government.

NPUG Secretary General Khalid Muhyi al-Din directed his speech at the NDP leaders: This gathering is the best reply to the NDP leaders and I challenge them to hold a rally such as this, if they can, without the support of the state apparatus and police.

In reply to the prime minister, who said that the emergency law would not be used against the proponents of opinions, the NPUG leader said: This claim is mistaken because under the emergency law AL-AHALI [the NPUG paper] and its articles opposing Mubarak's election were confiscated. Workers in Al-Mahmudiyah and Al-Mahallah al-Kubra were detained merely because they expressed solidarity with the uprising of the Palestinian people. Moreover, families were abducted and terrorized in order to get one wanted person to give himself up—a strange policy that was never previously pursued.

He concluded his speech by emphasizing that democracy is not a grant or a gift; nor is it the freedom to scream via the press, since there are 1 million readers of the press, but the population is more than 50 million. Freedom is the right of the people to stage peaceful processions, strikes, and sit-ins, as well as to form parties and publish papers, and so on. [passage omitted]

Liberal Party leader Mustafa Kamil Murad said: I met with President Mubarak and urged him to amend the Constitution. I told him that the Presidency must not exceed two terms. The president's answer was that he did not want more than one term. I reminded him that President al-Sadat said the same thing, but later he was appointed president for life.

He asked: What has President Mubarak done with all these promises? The Liberal Party leader said: President Mubarak has isolated himself from the people; he has not met with opposition leaders for a long time. He now relies on reports from intelligence and security organs. They provide him with regular reports that contradict the truth.

On the need to amend the Constitution, the Liberal Party leader said: The current Constitution must be amended because it is not suitable and was written to serve the ruler. [passage omitted]

Ummah Party leader Ahmad al-Sabahi said: Are we truly patriotic Egyptians, or agents and traitors violating the system and security, merely because we demand that the president and his government stop working under the emergency law, amend the Constitution, and establish a parliamentary system instead of a presidential one? We still live under the democracy of the wolf and the sheep; the method of rule is to put poison in honey. We still live in the era of political oppression; both democracy and freedom have been lost. We are weeping for ourselves, slaughtered freedom, and murdered democracy.

He stressed that under British governments and occupation the Egyptian people were better off. The government must be aware of this before it is too late, since the deluge is undoubtedly on its way.

Opposition Invited To Resume Dialogue With NDP

PM250931 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Apr 88 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Egypt: Negotiations To Restart Dialogue Between Ruling Party and Opposition Parties"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned from informed party sources that negotiations are going on between the ruling National Party and the opposition parties to reach agreement on restarting dialogue between them. This will permit discussion of all national issues and agreement on the method of settling them, especially with regard to pressing problems.

These sources have mentioned that the ruling party in Egypt has shown its readiness to restart the national dialogue, with the need to separate the position of the opposition parties on the prolongation of the emergency law for 3 more years, starting 1 May, through 1991 from the current dialogue with the parties. The sources have stated that the ruling party rejected outright attempts by opposition party leaders to impose prior conditions for restarting the dialogue, confirming that restarting a dialogue is in the interests of both sides since the opposition is part of the system.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that two approaches are currently being discussed: The first concerns the possibility of inviting opposition party leaders to a meeting with the Egyptian leadership in an attempt to calm people down and return national reconciliation to what it was when President Mubarak came to power in 1981, before the recent prolongation of the emergency law.

The second proposal is for the dialogue to be restarted in the presence of President Mubarak, in order to enhance it and bring about a fundamental change in its course, so that it is like a new guarantee for the opposition parties concerning the seriousness of the issues which they have raised.

The second proposal is the closest to implementation, especially since Mubarak promised at the outset that he will personally hold one of the sessions of the dialogue at the ruling party's headquarters.

Soviet Foreign Ministry Delegation Ends Visit

NC260622 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—Nikolay Mikhail Gribkov, chief of the Egypt Department at the Soviet Foreign Ministry, and Viktor Kuznetsov, deputy chief of the Near Eastern and North African Countries Administration at the Soviet Foreign Ministry [names as received], and their accompanying delegation left Cairo tonight after a 1-week visit to Egypt. The delegation's visit is one of the periodic visits made to inspect the progress of work at Soviet Embassies in the region.

CSSR Foreign Minister Arrives for 3-Day Visit

NC252048 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—CSSR Foreign Minister Bohuslav Chnoupek and his delegation arrived in Cairo from Prague tonight for a 3-day visit to Egypt. During his stay he will meet with Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi.

The Czechoslovak minister's visit will include talks, beginning tomorrow, with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister. Their discussions will deal with international issues of common interest and bilateral relations.

Following his arrival, the Czechoslovak foreign minister disclosed that he will deliver an important message from CSSR President Gustav Husak to President Husni Mubarak. He emphasized that his country is interested in its relations with Egypt, which he described as good.

The minister stressed that there is wide scope for cooperation between Egypt and Czechoslovakia. On the same subject, he revealed that he has brought plans with him on expanding and consolidating bilateral ties.

Chnoupek added that his discussions in Egypt will deal with Middle East developments and the European situation within the policy of the socialist states. He noted that he will listen to the Egyptian viewpoint in this regard and explain Czechoslovakia's own point of view. The minister further stated that the talks will broach issues pertaining to the Soviet proposal to convene an international conference for peace in the region.

Dr 'Ismat al-Majid, who welcomed Chnoupek at the airport, declared that cooperation between Egypt and Czechoslovakia is growing continuously, and stressed that strong relations already exist. He added that the two states are working for peace and stability in Europe and the Middle East.

'Abd al-Majid pointed out that he and Chnoupek will discuss issues related to the transfer of technology and bilateral economic cooperation.

Ghali Leaves for African, European Tour

NC230703 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, left Cairo this morning on a tour that will take him to Tanzania, Mauritius, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Dr Ghali has said he will deliver a handwritten message from President Husni Mubarak to Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi and that he will hold talks with the Tanzanian foreign minister on cultivating bilateral relations.

Dr Ghali added that during his visit to Mauritius he will head the Egyptian delegation to meetings of the joint Egyptian-Mauritian committee. The goal here is to coordinate the positions of the two countries in various spheres.

During his visit to the Netherlands and Switzerland, Dr Ghali said, he will hold talks with the foreign ministers of the two countries on the international conference called for by the emergency OAU summit to discuss the problem of African debts.

'Abd al-Majid Cited on Meeting With U.S. Envoy

NC231316 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1245 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and U.S. envoy Wat Cluverius, who is touring the Middle East, today discussed recent developments in the region and the outcome of meetings between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. [passage omitted]

'Abd al-Majid stated that the American envoy briefed him on the latest developments and conveyed the eagerness of the United States to continue efforts to push the peace process, despite existing difficulties. He noted that the meeting with Cluverius provided an opportunity to review the situation in the region, recent events, and the results of the meeting between Shultz and Shevardnadze. He pointed out that Egypt hopes to learn as soon as possible of the results of the meetings and consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union to assess

the desire for moves toward peace. He stressed that the forthcoming meeting in Moscow may herald important results, particularly regarding the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

Abu Ghazalah Cited on Gulf War, Security

NC231448 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1450 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Ismailia, 23 Apr (MENA)—Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, has stressed that Iraq does not need assistance from any party in its war against Iran. He noted in this regard Iraq's latest victory and liberation of the Al-Faw Peninsula, which was accomplished without help from anyone. He expressed hope that the liberation of Al-Faw will be a step toward ending the war between Iraq and Iran. Abu Ghazalah also noted Egypt's firm stand, which seeks an end to this war between the two Islamic states and its horrible losses.

Asked about U.S. interference in this war on Iraq's side, Abu Ghazalah said: "I do not believe this is true. As the United States has already declared, it has retaliated against a hostile act by Iran."

Abu Ghazalah made this statement today after inaugurating a camp for the 2d Field Army brigades and attending a practical exercise during which bridges were established on the Suez Canal and troops crossed to the east bank. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question on the possibility of Egyptian intervention in the Gulf war in the event Iraq meets with unfavorable developments, Abu Ghazalah said that Egypt's position is firm. He referred to previous declarations by President Husni Mubarak in which he noted that Egypt's national security and that of the Gulf are part of Arab national security and that whatever harms the Gulf states would harm Egypt. [passage omitted]

Relief Supplies Sent to West Bank, Gaza

JN251441 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 24 Apr 88 p 1

[Text] According to a responsible source at the Foreign Ministry, Egypt has prepared a program to continually provide the inhabitants of the Palestinian camps in the West Bank and Gaza with foodstuffs and other supplies that they urgently need in the current circumstances. He said that the first consignment—159 tonnes of food produced by public sector companies and the Ministry of Agriculture—has already arrived. It will be distributed to the Palestinians camps in the occupied territories through UNRWA and under the supervision of the Egyptian Embassy.

Oil Minister Leaves for Vienna OPEC Meetings

NC241233 Cairo MENA in English 1225 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, April 24 (MENA)—Minister of Oil and Mineral Wealth 'Abd al-Hadi Qandil left here today for Vienna to attend meetings of the pricing committee affiliated to OPEC in the presence also of the non-OPEC oil ministers. The meetings will be held in Vienna on Tuesday. Qandil will also attend OPEC meetings to be held Thursday. In a predeparture statement Qandil hoped that a joint understanding would be reached of the nature of the market.

Paper Criticizes U.S. Stand on Al-Wazir Murder

JN232022 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Apr 88 p 6

[Editorial: "There Are Various Types of Justice"]

[Text] The crisis of the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner has ended in a victory for the Kuwaiti Government and the principles it is defending. Kuwait did not yield to the demands of the pirates through the hard hours over the past 2 weeks, despite the two martyrs who paid the price for these principles with their lives.

This was a new victory for principles. Kuwaiti officials have asserted that there was no deal or bargain in return for the release of the hostages. Despite this, Arab and world public opinion pauses before the official statements made by Margaret Thatcher and George Shultz who have demanded that the airliner's pirates be tried, and before the U.S. Administration's official announcement that it will puruse the pirates and bring them to trial.

We do not object to Washington's very quick reaction, as the whole world understands the need to try the terrorists, who should not escape this tragedy unpunished. After all, the whole world is interested in ending terrorism since it leads to further terrorism, creates chaos, and conflicts with moral values and international charters. However, we wonder how the U.S. Administration can ignore another terrorist operation which occurred at the time of the airliner incident. This operation was carried out by an official entity of a country friendly to the United States—a country which enjoys a favored position with the United States. This country is Israel, whose Mosad assassinated the Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] after receiving a green light from the Israeli inner cabinet. It was an integrated terrorist operation aimed at the sovereignty of an independent country and was carried out in the dark by skilled terrorists, who fled after perpetrating their crime to receive laurels. However, we did not hear a condemnation or even a denunciation by the U.S. Administration despite the fact that state terrorism is more serious than terrorism carried out by a group of individuals, although we condemn all forms.

Of course, terrorism is terrorism whether pursued by an individual or a state. This is especially true with a state which adopts terrorism and repression as a means of dealing with the region's peoples and suppresses the struggle of the Palestinian people who are simply rejecting the yoke of occupation. People expect American justice to be neutral and not to differentiate between one case and another, so that the United States will truly be a country of freedom, justice, and equality.

AL-AKHBAR Warns Against 'Appeasement' of Iran

NC240538 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2130 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR has warned the major world powers and Arab and Islamic countries against the policy of appeasement, which they insist on pursuing toward the Khomeyni government, despite the tension in the Gulf sustained by its persistent actions.

In an editorial which will appear Sunday, the paper notes that it has been 10 months since the UN Security Council issued Resolution 598, which calls on the two warring parties to bring the Gulf war to an immediate halt, return to their recognized borders, and sit at the negotiating table. The paper adds that the UN Security Council has since failed to implement its resolution because of the Iranian regime's intransigence and the twisted methods it uses to evade making a definite decision for or against the resolution.

AL-AKHBAR stresses that the Iranian rulers have once again adopted belligerence and bandit-like methods against the nonbelligerent Gulf countries, laying mines in the Gulf and resuming their provocative acts of aggression against various ships and certain Arab territories. According to the paper, the policy of appeasement and leniency that the world community follows in the face of Iran's follies, crimes, and terrorist schemes only strongly encourages Iran to continue its course. The paper refers in this respect to Western Europe's appeasement of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, which led to the outbreak of World War II.

In conclusion, the paper reminds world leaders of the catastrophes that have befallen humanity as a result of appeasement.

Libya

Absent Military Personnel Ordered Back to Units

LD252121 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] In view of the continuous U.S. and imperialist threats to the Libyan Arab people, the General Command of the Armed Forces orders all deserters and military personnel currently absent to rejoin their units immediately or by 1 May at the latest.

This announcement should be considered the last chance. Anyone who does not rejoin his unit by the announced date will be brought before a battlefield military court in accordance with the latest alteration to the military penal code, which includes deterrent punishments for those who try to avoid doing their duty to the homeland.

However, those who rejoin their units by the date specified will, by this announcement, be exempt from punishment for absence and desertion for the previous period.

Maltese Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

LD231229 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Apr (JANA)—Maltese Foreign Minister Dr Vincent Tabone and an accompanying delegation arrived in Tripoli today on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

In a statement to a JANA correspondent, he stressed that this visit comes within the framework of consultations and talks. He said: I feel at home in the Jamahiriyah and this is a positive indicator of the good relations between the two friendly peoples and an expression of the strong friendship which binds them.

Meets Foreign Liaison Secretary

LD231751 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Apr (JANA)—The brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison met this afternoon in Tripoli with Maltese Foreign Minister Dr Vincent Tabone.

During the meeting, they discussed aspects of cooperation between the Libyan Arab people and the Maltese people, and ways to boost them. They also reviewed major international issues of common interest and coordinated views between the two countries.

The meeting was attended by the Maltese ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah, and the directors of Arab and European administrations and cooperation desks at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison.

Ends Visit, Departs

LD232115 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Dr Vincent Tabone, the Maltese foreign minister, and the members of his delegation left Tripoli this evening following a short visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Mauritania

International Aid Sought Against Locusts

AB2604082488 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0730 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Yesterday, the minister of rural development launched an appeal for international solidarity in helping the country to fight the locust invasion. Hammoud Ould Ely, who launched this appeal at a meeting in Nouakchott with members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of nongovernmental organizations, stated in particular that Mauritania's oases and crops in the northern part of the country are faced with the threat of locust invasion. He added that (?if international aid were not forthcoming) Mauritania's agricultural produce would be destroyed by May. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Council Accepts Government's Resignation

JN251805 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1740 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 25 Apr (SUNA)—Today the State Council accepted the resignation that Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi had submitted earlier, but discussion of it was postponed.

State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani said the Council decided to accept the resignation as of Tuesday, adding that the Council will officially notify the Constituent Assembly of this so that it can choose a new prime minister.

Regional Governor on Kenyan Support to Rebels

JN241053 Khartoum SUNA in English 1015 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, April 24 (SUNA)—Governor of the Equatoria Region Peter Serillo accused the Kenyan Government of continuing to present military support to the so-called Sudan People Liberation Movement SPLM of John Garang.

In a statement to the daily AL-USBU' published here today, Serillo expressed regret that Kenya is interfering in Sudan's internal affairs and said that there are some foreign quarters persuading Kenya to support the outlaws in southern Sudan.

The governor also affirmed that the International Council of Churches and the International Red Cross are supporting Garang movement.

Serillo accused the southern politicians resident in Khartoum of being not faithful to their country and citizens.

Rebel Commander Returns From Foreign Tour

EA222114 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Today, the official spokesman of the SPLM-SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-Sudanese People's Liberation Army] revealed to Radio SPLA that the chairman and commander-in-chief, SPLM-SPLA, Comrade John Garang de Mabior, has returned to the field after several weeks of successful visits to a number of countries. The spokesman also said that the commander-in-chief congratulates officers, NCO's and men of the SPLA for the splendid victories that were scored during his absence, especially the victories of Nasir and Juba Airport. The spokesman declined to say which countries the commander-in-chief visited or what was discussed.

Tunisia

President Terms UN Resolution 'Victory'

LD252301 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Yesterday [25 April] evening the UN Security Council ratified a resolution condemning the Israeli aggression against Tunisian territory on 16 April. It was ratified with a majority of 14 votes with 1 abstention, the United States.

The first reaction came from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who congratulated the Tunisian people via the radio in the Ramadan Hospitality program yesterday evening. The president's address included:

[Begin Ben Ali recording] On this occasion I would like to congratulate the Tunisian people on this victory. Every representative, and those who addressed the Council—there were about 46—every one of them was full of praise and appreciation for Tunisia, and they emphasized Tunisia's contribution to peace and ideals. They all, without exception, concentrated on the necessity of respecting the Tunisia of 7 November.

Clearly, this shows a high appreciation for the status of Tunisia. In fact, our victory restores the good name of the United Nations and emphasizes the commitment of the international community to justice and right. God be praised, and we again congratulate the Tunisian people. If God helps you, none can overcome you. God bless you. I wish you a happy evening. [end recording]

Assassins' Passports Traced to Israel

LD251333 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The investigation committee charged by His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to look into the circumstances of the criminal operation [the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir] has received a report

from Lebanese security authorities stating that two of the three passports used by the members of the terrorist gang to rent cars to carry out the assassination were provided by Israeli authorities. They are as follows:

1. Passport No 410199, which bore the name (Najib Rashad Ghurya), is the property of a Lebanese national. It has been learned that he works as a mechanic aboard a ship flying the Lebanese flag which was captured in Cypriot waters by the Israeli authorities in the summer of 1984 while the ship was on a commercial trip between the Limassol, Cyprus and Lebanon.

The Israeli authorities accompanied the ship to Haifa and detained its captain, named ('Abd al-Jalil Bizin), accusing him of collaborating with the Palestinian Fatah movement. They also [word indistinct] among them (Najib Rashad Ghurya), who was released once the Israelis had confiscated their passports. He immediately informed the Lebanese authorities, who issued him a new passport.

2. With regard to Passport No 489499, which bore the name (Khalil Kafi), it has been revealed that its owner is a Lebanese national. His passport was confiscated by Israeli forces on 22 February 1985 during an attack against the village of Surah, during which they invaded his house. The person in question confirmed this when he informed Lebanese security authorities on 20 December 1985.

Prime Minister Interviewed by Saudi Paper

PM260845 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic
18 Apr 88 p 13

[Interview with Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche by unidentified reporter; date, place not specified]

[Excerpts] [Interviewer] What are the results of President Zine El Abedine Ben Ali's visit to the Kingdom?

[Baccouche] Zine El Abedine Ben Ali's visit to the sacred lands constitutes a political event, because it has strengthened the relations between the two leaders—between the custodian of the two holy mosques and the president; it has given bilateral relations new dimensions, and it has underscored the excellent and special relationship between the two countries since 7 November. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] What are the reasons for your visit to Sudan?

[Baccouche] After 7 November we announced that we would give our Islamic and Arab relations a profound dimension; and the president empowered me to emphasize this to the kings and heads of Arab states. I have visited most of the Arab Gulf countries, in addition to Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, and Sudan, and I will visit Egypt for consultations on common issues. Tunisia and Sudan have common interests in foreign affairs and in political and economic cooperation.

[Interviewer] What is your opinion of the Israeli threats to the Kingdom following its procurement of Chinese missiles?

[Baccouche] We have kept track of all the reports to do with the purchase of these missiles and the reaction of the Israelis. We have expressed our solidarity with, and our full and complete support for, the Kingdom, as it has every right to obtain arms from any quarter that it can. There is no apprehension over Israel's threats.

The Kingdom is steadfast and sticks to its rights. It holds its head high, which has been very encouraging for us. We attach great importance to everything that emanates from the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] Is there a plan to convene an Arab Maghreb summit embracing Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, and Libya?

[Baccouche] So far there have been summits between the Libyan Jamahiriyah and Tunisia, Tunisia and Algeria, and Algeria and Morocco, at ministerial level, and Tunisia and Morocco. We are in need of a comprehensive summit to include Mauritania and the Jamahiriyah. Some time ago there was a gulf between Libya and Tunisia. We have overcome this gulf and our relations have become fraternal.

The restoration of relations between Tunisia and Libya could facilitate the building of the Arab Maghreb as one of the stages toward Arab unity. We may agree on the reasons to convene a summit but we have not gone into that. [passage omitted]. Now, with the Tunisian-Libyan rapprochement, the reasons exist for holding a Maghreb summit.

[Interviewer] Libya has taken measures to open the borders between it and Tunisia. How would you describe these measures?

[Baccouche] Tunisian-Libyan relations are good, Algerian-Libyan relations are sound, and Maghreb-Libyan relations are good. So there are abundant reasons for meetings at the summit level among the countries of the Arab Maghreb.

[Interviewer] What about the multiplicity of parties in Tunisia?

[Baccouche] I believe that each Tunisian and each group of Tunisians can express opinions and views on issues concerning the country. However, the bases of the diverse organization of the parties must be controlled. We have submitted a draft law with basic preconditions

for some political events. We are now thinking about a national charter containing the intellectual, political, and social bases around which the nation can fully and completely rally.

When the law organizing parties is ratified and the charter defining the basis of the collective approach to national issues is drawn up, then plurality becomes an advantage because there will then be various ideas within a framework of Tunisian unity. God willing, these pieces of legislation will be promulgated soon. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] Has the problem of the Tunisian workers in Libya ended?

[Baccouche] We are presently in the process of implementing a settlement initially agreed 4 months ago.

[Interviewer] What about the Kingdom's relations with Tunisia?

[Baccouche] Tunisia's relations with the Kingdom are good and they have greatly improved in all areas. On this occasion I would like to convey my greetings to all the officials headed by the custodian of the two holy mosques and his highness the crown prince. We also thank them for the welcome we receive each time we visit the Kingdom.

Socialist Democrats on National Charter

LD241852 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Socialist Democratic Movement issued a statement yesterday which states that the Political Bureau of the movement registers with great satisfaction President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's call to all Tunisians, on the occasion of the recent cabinet meeting, to prepare for participation in a wide-ranging dialogue on a National Charter for the support and agreement of all the sides and orientations.

The bureau also notes that the draft law on parties currently submitted for the attention of the Chamber of Deputies has not taken account, according to the Bureau, of the Socialist Democratic Movement's suggestions which requested delaying the discussion on the law on parties until the National Charter is ready.

In reply to this statement, an informed source has explained to TAP that the formulation of the draft law on parties had been concluded following broad consultation which enabled the recognized parties and several personalities to voice their views and opinions. The totality of these contributions was taken into account.

The adopted draft law cannot be that of a particular party or person. It is, however, a draft law of the government which aims at reconciliation of various points of view, and sets up matters in a general framework for the present and the future.

The source added that the law on parties will not merely organize political life. It will also allow the creation of ideological currents and new organizations. It will allow participation in consultations on the National Charter, something which would be impossible were the law not passed before the consultations.

The delay of discussion on the draft law on parties will consequently be a form of exclusion, and a rejection of the necessity of organizing the political life stipulated by the declaration of 7 November, awaited eagerly by the entire national community.

Western Sahara

Mauritanian Minister Meets With President

LD231042 Algiers APS in Arabic 0910 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Liberated Territories, 23 Apr (APS)—Within the framework of consultations between both countries and to consolidate the ties between the two fraternal peoples of Mauritania and the SDAR, El Hadj Abderrahmane Dia, Mauritanian minister of civil service, administrative training, labor, and youth [title as received], visited the SDAR 21-22 April.

On Thursday, the Mauritanian minister was received by Mohamed Abdelaziz, SDAR president and Polisario secretary general. He conveyed to him a message from Mauritanian President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya on bilateral relations and the situation in the region, especially UN and OAU efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between the SDAR and Morocco by means of the full implementation of OAU resolution 104 and UN Resolution (?42).

Saddam Husayn on Al-Faw Battles, Resolution 598
JN251241 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0700 GMT 25 Apr 88

["Full recording" of address by President Saddam Husayn during a ceremony for awarding medals of valor to the Army chief of staff and his aide, the commander of the VII Army Corps, the director of military intelligence, and the commander of the 6th Division—date, place not given]

[Excerpts] In 1986, when the enemy occupied the Al-Faw triangle, including the city of Al-Faw, the major portion of our forces found themselves in the Salty Lake.

One only has to actually see the Salty Lake to have an idea of the difficulties involved, both defensively and offensively. We were determined not to allow the enemy to advance any further by using the element of surprise referred to by General 'Adnan Khayrallah, the deputy commander in chief.

It was at this point that our forces arrived to halt the enemy's thrust, absorb the impetus of its attack, and destroy it. The fighters were living in this Salty Lake which is made up of salt and mud.

They were up to their waists in salt and mud while working to halt the enemy attack and prevent it from reaching Umm Qasr and areas close to Kuwait. They were trying to prevent the enemy from heading northwest to reach the oil installations and from occupying Basra.

The command of the VII Army Corps was then entrusted to General Mahir ['Abd al-Rashid]. He suffered a great deal to erect a defensive position. Building a defensive position in partially or completely appropriate circumstances is one thing, while building a defensive position during enemy action and in atopography of the kind I referred to is quite another.

Despite all the active support from the General Command, the field commander remains the basis for implementing its ideas and instructions, in addition to carrying out his own innovations and responsibilities.

After the defensive position was in place, we summoned him and held a meeting. We said we must liberate Al-Faw and do whatever is necessary to realize our goal.

We began to draw up the plan and created its general framework. We entrusted others to draft the details of the plan on the level of the army corps and the General Command. [passage omitted]

As our comrades and we pointed out previously, I doubt that the enemy will return to its senses. There is no way it can return to its senses. However, the enemy will commit new follies and you must be ready to punish it everywhere.

Let it feel true remorse. Surely, the enemy must now be remorseful. Surely, many of those who have minds, if there are any, and these can mostly be found among the opposition, must ask Khomeyni and his henchmen if it would not have been better to join the path of peace before the Al-Faw battles.

We say that what is better is chosen by God, whether peace comes after the Al-Faw battles, before, or at any time. We believe in peace; unconditional peace according to which every party remains sovereign in the country with its own policy and causing no trouble. [passage omitted]

We call on them to follow the path of peace in order to avert further deaths among the Iranian people. If the war goes on, then the rate of death that will befall them will be far greater than what they have experienced so far because the Iraqis are determiend not to relinquish their land, dignity, or honor.

Nor are they willing to give up the dignity, security, or honor of the Arab nation. The Iraqis are developing their resources, increasing their capabilities, and most importantly, entrenching their faith more and more.

UN Security Council Resolution No 598 is clear. There is no beating around the bush on it. Unconditional acceptance and readiness to implement the resolution with good will is the path that would save Iran from destruction.

Surely, the Iraqis welcome it because we want to secure Iran's dignity along with their sovereignty, honor, and peace. The Iraqis have no ambitions in Iran.

Iraq does not believe that the Iranian officials covet 1 inch of Iraq's land or wish to defile the dignity of the Iraqis or any Arab in the Arab homeland. [passage omitted]

At the briefing by the deputy commander in chief, he noted that after the enemy's collapse, our units wanted to cross to the eastern bank of the Shatt al-'Arab across one of the bridges there.

The units went there and found the bridge had been severed in three places by the Air Force, although the bridge had been designed to withstand even heavy bombing, that is unless it received a direct hit certain types of bombs.

I jokingly told the deputy commander in chief: If you wanted to cross to the eastern bank, you should not have forgotten to tell Abu Zayd [Air Force commander] not to destroy the bridge.

Among the Air Force's duties was to cut off the bridge, cut enemy supply lines, and sever lines of retreat so as to make things difficult for them. This was in addition to the interdiction operations inside enemy territory and strikes at other targets. [passage omitted]

Deputy Foreign Minister Interviewed on Gulf War

JN241532 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic
22 Apr 88 p 13

[Interview with First Deputy Foreign Minister Wisam al-Zahawi by Marion Hooke in New York—date not given]

[Text] [Hooke] During the UN secretary general's talks with the Iranian envoy Larijani and with you in your capacity as Iraqi envoy, the secretary general said he is prepared to fix a deadline for the cease-fire. Did you reply to his proposal?

[Al-Zahawi] Yes. We made it clear that Iran should categorically, unequivocally, and unconditionally accept Resolution No 598. However, so far there is no document signed by the Iranian authorities indicating such acceptance. Indeed, we have heard various statements by top Iranian leaders stating that Resolution No 598 is unacceptable.

Iranian President Khamene'i said very clearly that acceptance of Resolution 598 means defeat for Iran. Even their envoy who was here to meet with the UN secretary general (Deputy Foreign Minister Larijani) informed the president of the Security Council that Resolution 598 is obsolescent and that the issue of its acceptance is of no consequence.

In the face of such a stand we find ourselves unable to enter into a detailed discussion of the implementation plans as long as one of the sides is not clearly committed to the text of Resolution 598.

[Hooke] Has the Iranian envoy to the president of the Security Council hinted that he wants a redrafting of Resolution No 598?

[Al-Zahawi] No. The president of the Security Council did not say that to us. However, what he did say was that the Iranian envoy told him that Resolution No 598 is obsolescent and that its acceptance is an issue of no consequence.

We do not take into consideration only the statements by Iranian leaders, but we also take into consideration Iranian behavior on the ground and on the battlefront. They have launched one attack after the other.

I believe the Iranian envoy also said to the UN secretary general: We must not talk about the withdrawal of forces. Indeed, he may have said that Iraq is losing territory daily. Thus you see he was boasting about Iranian gains on the ground. These are all factors that we cannot ignore and we hope that the Security Council also will not ignore these factors but will take them into account.

That is why we insist first and foremost on Iran accepting Resolution No 598 categorically, unequivocally, and unconditionally.

[Hooke] Did you officially inform the secretary general that you do not agree to a deadline, or that you will not listen to any proposal on a deadline before there is such Iranian acceptance?

[Al-Zahawi] No. We said we are prepared to sit down and negotiate in good faith with the Iranians and the UN secretary general on the implementation of Resolution No 598 in all its articles when the secretary general receives Iran's acceptance.

We did not say to him we will not agree, but we said we expect and await a clear acceptance from Iran. Both sides need to reach a negotiating settlement and agree on a cease-fire. One cannot walk into a vacuum without knowing the Iranian commitment to implement all the resolution's articles.

[Hooke] However, according to the UN secretary general the Iranian stand goes a long way toward implementing what you want. The Iranians maintain that the peace plan and the Security Council resolution are inseparable. They informed the UN secretary general that they intend to implement it as an indivisible whole.

[Al-Zahawi] If they consider the resolution to be inseparable from the peace plan, why then do they not clearly declare their acceptance of the resolution? The failure to make such a declaration is suspicious and can only mean one thing: namely, that Iran refuses to commit itself to the resolution in a document, just as it did when the resolution was adopted in July 1987.

[Hooke] But they say they will implement it as an indivisible whole. Is it insufficient for Iraq to sit at the negotiating table and to at least have a cease-fire?

[Al-Zahawi] We are concerned with more than a cease-fire because, as you see, it will lead neither to a comprehensive settlement of the conflict nor to a lasting peace.

A cease-fire in itself will not solve the problem. We want implementation of all articles of the resolution as drawn up by the Security Council. We do not only seek a cease-fire because there are Iraqi territories and captives still held by Iran which will be used as a means to pressure Iraq or the Security Council.

This means that we will face another situation or perhaps another Resolution 242 on which we may negotiate for 20 years to determine which forces will withdraw and from which territory.

Hence, we do not accept such a situation. We should ascertain that, along with any steps that will be taken, there should be prior commitment by both parties to implement all articles of the agreement.

Iraq has offered such a commitment and reiterated its acceptance of the resolution more than once without prior conditions and with good intent toward implementing all its articles.

[Hooke] In their reply to the UN secretary general, the Iranians actually agreed to...

[Al-Zahawi, interrupting] So far, there has been no official document from the Iranian Government signed by their highest responsible authorities that may provide for the Iranians' acceptance of the resolution.

I frankly say: Various Iranian representatives utter different remarks in various ways. Therefore, we should obtain a clear-cut, decisive document providing for Iranian acceptance of the resolution.

[Hooke] The UN secretary general said he will endeavor to obtain a clear Iranian stand but he did not say he will endeavor to obtain their approval.

[Al-Zahawi] Hence, it will be the Security Council that should decide on this matter. However, we have a strong feeling and we hope that the Security Council will also feel that this is a necessary and required issue in this phase following 9 months of a useless exchange of views.

We are confident that all this playing with words and maneuvers of which the Iranians are masters are sufficient to convince the Security Council members that it is time to obtain a frank commitment from Iran.

[Hooke] Will you accept the Iranian stand, as mentioned by the UN secretary general, if it is conveyed in the form of a signed, official Iranian document?

[Al-Zahawi] No, we cannot accept the issue of formulation which says that the plan cannot be separated from the resolution. We want a clear, frank acceptance of the resolution itself.

We said so in light of the numerous statements made by Khamene'i, Velayati, and Musavi which vehemently criticize Resolution 598 and say it is unacceptable in its current formula. Thus, the Iranians have rejected and continue to reject this resolution.

[Hooke] But there is Velayati's famous message on 24 February. This message says Iran's agreement to implement the plan implies approval of Resolution 598.

[Al-Zahawi] If this is so, then why do they not frankly and clearly accept the resolution? As you see, this is in itself sufficient to cast many doubts. Why this maneuvering? Let them say it frankly if they actually have good intentions. Why do they not simply say: We accept Resolution 598?

[Hooke] Let me put the question differently. Suppose for some domestic reason they cannot announce that.

[Al-Zahawi] But I'm afraid this is unacceptable. If they do have some domestic reason it's their problem. They are telling their people the resolution is unacceptable, so they must take the responsibility.

Whatever domestic problem there is they must not expect the UN chief or Security Council to solve it for them.

[Hooke] But they say they will implement the resolution.

[Al-Zahawi] If that is the case let them put it into a document demonstrating their willingness to implement the resolution. You must know that they have been boycotting the Security Council for 8 years.

They have also rejected and violated all its resolutions. Perhaps you recall Resolution No 552 of 1984 on attacks against Kuwaiti shipping and Saudi ports. The resolution warned Iran against a repetition of such attacks, or the council will look into other measures against Iran.

It was for this reason that the Iranian attacks continued. Regrettably the Security Council took no action, thus encouraging the Iranians. It is possible that the Security Council hoped it would thus lure Iran to the negotiating table and respect the world body.

But the Iranians would not relent. They kept denouncing the council members and boycotting its business for the past 8 years. It is indeed regrettable that they decided this approach paid dividends.

In fact, concessions have been made to them. We feel now that it is high time the Security Council said: This far and no further. It is high time the Iranians put their cards on the table.

Over the past 8 years, they have played fast and loose with the Security Council's resolutions. Hence the need for documented, material proof of true Iranian intentions.

[Hooke] Last week, Iranian envoy Larijani told AL-BAYAN that his country may accept one of two approaches: either an implementation of the first two steps of the peace plan to begin with, in other words a cease-fire followed by initiating investigations into the responsibility for starting the war, and then implementing the other points of the plan, or implementing the plan on one try, which would mean deferment of a cease-fire until all the problems have been resolved through negotiation.

[Al-Zahawi] All this is well and good. This is what Larijani says. But other higher ranking Iranian officials have declared their rejection of the resolution. We therefore cannot take Larijani's statements on their face value in light of the statements of more senior officials of the Iranian regime.

It will not be sufficient for Larijani to inform the UN chief of their intentions. We want a document signed by Iran's highest echelons—the policymakers, and Larijani isn't one of them.

[Hooke] I don't know whether you have been informed about the initial returns in the Iranian elections. Do you think they hold out any hopes of an imminent end to the war?

[Al-Zahawi] No. There have been no statements or indications to point in that direction. Rather, they have been repeating the same goal, namely to pursue hostilities until victory.

This is the theme we have heard from all of them without exception, which is one reason why we give no credence to what Larijani told the UN secretary general.

[Hooke] We have learned that he proposed establishing a working committee to the secretary general...

[Al-Zahawi, interrupting] For what? Let them first declare their acceptance, and then we set up a working committee, sit together, and negotiate.

[Hooke] Have you said that you are prepared to set and negotiate with the Iranians?

[Al-Zahawi] Yes, under the auspices of the secretary general.

[Hooke] But the Iranians do not appear to be ready to sit with the Iraqis. Is this a new obstacle?

[Al-Zahawi] This is their problem.

[Hooke] Are you prepared to cooperate with the secretary general?

[Al-Zahawi] Yes, on the condition that we first obtain this explicit document. From the beginning and in our first letter to the secretary general we said we accept Resolution 598.

But as you know, the matter concerns the two parties. We cannot implement a cease-fire and stress our commitment to the resolution unilaterally while the Iranians continue their attacks on our country.

[Hooke] You also said that you accept the implementation plan.

[Al-Zahawi] Yes. We did accept the executive plan that the secretary general presented to the Security Council on 16 September and was approved by the council. We accepted the plan because it is in full harmony with the clauses of Resolution 598.

[Hooke] Do you have any formula that you may propose to achieve a breakthrough?

[Al-Zahawi] Well, yes there is a formula. First we obtain the signed document. That is all we ask. I believe that it is our right and the right of the Security Council to obtain a clear and unequivocal answer from the Iranian regime.

You may recall that they issued a statement saying that they neither accept nor reject the resolution. This is unacceptable. The issue is so serious that no one can play with it like this.

The resolution is binding. They should not have escaped it in such a way that is unprecedented in the history of the United Nations and the Security Council.

A binding resolution means binding. All parties must accept it. You cannot say that you neither accept nor reject it. As to why they did not declare their unequivocal rejection of the resolution, they realized that such rejection would be immediately followed by another resolution that forcefully imposes Resolution 598 on the party that does not comply with it.

[Hooke] In fact, Larijani used the same words in his press conference and in his statement to me. He said that the resolution is binding, and because it is binding, "we must not accept it".

[Al-Zahawi] Then why do they not say this? Moreover, this is not something to be said by Larijani alone in a press conference. We want an official document from his chiefs.

That is the point. They may nullify any statement by Larijani. I mean, who is Larijani? He is not the dedcisionmaking authority on this matter. You know that and I know it.

Let them produce this document. If what he said actually reflects their view, then why do not his chiefs present to the secretary general a signed document from the decisionmakers in Tehran to say that they accept?

[Hooke] Do you mean that the required document should be signed by all the decisionmakers in Tehran?

[Al-Zahawi] Of course not. I mean the spokesman for the regime, the foreign minister, the president, and the prime minister. These are the ones authorized to make a statement to his effect in a press conference.

[Hooke] But when Larijani gave that statement to the secretary general, it is certain that he was speaking on behalf of those you mentioned.

[Al-Zahawi] Why did he not present a document like the one I presented? I made a statement, but at the same time I presented a document signed by the deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Iraq.

I should expect the other side to present a document on the same level, not just a statement to the secretary general or to the press.

[Hooke] Do you think that the secretary general should go to Tehran to obtain such a document?

[Al-Zahawi] You may ask.

[Hooke] Do you call for this?

[Al-Zahawi] No. It is up to him, although I, of course, explained that we expect the Security Council to obtain this document from the Iranian Government.

[Hooke] I have learned from my unofficial contacts with the UN Security Council member states that they believe that the Iraqi and Iranian stands are still as intransigent as they were in December.

[Al-Zahawi] What intransigence do you mean? We have said that we accept the resolution and that the Iranians are the ones who set new conditions, as the UN secretary general himself told the UN Security Council.

The Iranians came up with new elements that have nothing to do with the resolution. However, Iraq did nothing of the kind. All we said is that the resolution should be implemented in the way it was approved.

We have not set strange conditions that have nothing to do with the resolution. The Iranians did that and they have their own interpretation of the resolution. The UN secretary general asked Khamene'i, who was attending the UN General Assembly's recent session: Suppose the investigations do not produce the results you expect?

Khamene'i answered that the committee would then be considered biased. This means that they will not accept the result of the investigation, and consequently they will not accept the resolution.

As you see, their condition differs from Iraq's stand. We have accepted the resolution and they have not. They have no desire to implement it as it was issued. They seek to achieve through diplomacy what they could not achieve through arms. This is something we do not accept and will not allow.

[Hooke] When the UN secretary general said that Iran added new elements to the resolution he meant the issue that Iran raised, namely the exchange of POW's and sending them back to their country, something that was not included in the resolution.

[Al-Zahawi] Yes, they also talked about denouncing and punishing the aggressor and something like that.

[Hooke] I do not know whether you noticed that Larijani, at his press conference and in his interview with me did not use these words, but used more neutral language...

[Al-Zahawi, interrupting] Well, this is the way. Everyday they come up with new words, new forms, and new maneuvers. This is why we want a clear and frank commitment which, before anything else, indicates that they have accepted the resolution.

[Hooke] What attracts our attention is that he is now using the same language as the resolution.

[Al-Zahawi] Sorry, the language at a press conference is unlike an official document. They are words that you can easily change just as they did in the past. At this point, we are not ready to get into details.

We did this throughout the past 8 months with no results. Therefore, discussing the details will be useless. It is now necessary for the UN Security Council to obtain Iran's acceptance of the resolution. We insist on this.

[Hooke] What will you do if this is not achieved?

[Al-Zahawi] If this is not achieved and if Iran is not ready to show a clear commitment to Resolution 598, then this means that the UN Security Council should adopt further measures against the part that does not accept the resolution in accordance with what is included in the resolution itself.

[Hooke] But the information I have through my unofficial contacts with the UN Security Council say that any new measures to be adopted will be taken against both sides.

[Al-Zahawi] This would be completely unfair and it conflicts with the provision of the UN Charter. The UN Charter says that sanctions and measures to implement resolutions should be taken against the side that does not respond to the binding resolution issued by the UN Security Council, and Iraq has accepted this resolution.

Iraq has cooperated with the UN Security Council the years. It has also rejected and violated all resolutions issued since 1980. Iran has not announced its frank acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 598.

In light of this, how can you put both sides on equal footing and say that sanctions will be taken against both sides? This would be a flagrant violation of the principles and provisions of the UN Charter.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 3,157

JN251720 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1707 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,157 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 25 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our Armed Forces continued their activities last night and today as follows:

1. The courageous helicopter gunship knights flew 46 combat missions, inflicting fresh losses on the enemy scoundrels, weapons, and equipment. Afterward, they returned with their planes safely to base, praise be to God.

2. Two infantry positions were destroyed and six ammunition dumps were blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector. Three enemy personnel were killed in the II Army Corps central sector.

3. Our courageous units in the III Army Corps sector east of Basra at two different times yesterday spotted two enemy drones and managed to down them.

4. One machinegun emplacement was destroyed and one enemy tank was damaged in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris. One single-barrelled machinegun was destroyed and two ammunition dumps were blown up in the VII Army corps sector.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 25 April 1988

New Missile With 900-km Range Launched 25 Apr

JN251612 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1543 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has blessed the efforts of the valiant mujahidin in the Miltiary Industries Organization [MIO]. His excellency ordered that the name Al-'Abbas be given to the missile that these mujahidin launched this morning at a target 860 km away and that has a range of 900 km. He wished them success granted by Almighty God.

The MIO head, Brigadier General Husayn Kamil, sent a cable to President Saddam Husayn in this regard. In his cable, Brig Gen Husayn Kamil said: At 0915 [0515 GMT] today, Monday, 25 April 1988, a newly developed Iraqi missile of the Al-Husayn missiles was launched. It hit the set target 860 kms away from the launch site. This missile has a range of 900 km.

He added: This great achievement in promoting another generation of the long-range Al-Husayn missiles has been realized in record time thanks to your excellency's continued care and support for your men in the MIO.

While taking pride in this achievement, we are pleased to present it as a gift to the leader of the victory on his birthday as an expression of our great love and pride.

He said: Upon your instructions, we are fully ready to promote new missiles with longer ranges. We are also ready to work with all determination and resolve to realize whatever range your excellency may order us to attain with God's help.

Peres Calls for Postponement of Peace Moves

OW261329 Tokyo KYODO in English 1324 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Jerusalem, April 26 KYODO—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said Tuesday a Mideast peace initiative should be postponed until next year if the United States and the Soviet Union cannot reach agreement before their summit in Moscow starting May 29.

Peres told a group of Japanese reporters that the two superpowers want a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But if they deal with the issue without reaching agreement, there will only be increased confrontation between them, he said.

Peres described as serious an anti-Israel uprising by Palestinians which erupted last December in the Israel-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip but said it is losing strength.

Nearly 300 Palestinians have reportedly been killed and at least 9,000 others wounded.

Peres reiterated Israel's policy not to become the first Mideast nation to possess nuclear weapons and said Israel is ready to take part in talks to turn the Mideast into a nuclear-free zone.

Rabin: 'Arafat To 'Pay a Price' for Syrian Ties

TA251538 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Report by military correspondent Alon Ben-David on Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's 25 April tour of Rishon Leziyyon]

[Text] 'Arafat has long tried to resume relations with Syria, the defense minister said, because without it he has hardly any access to Lebanon. In exchange for the resumption of ties, 'Arafat will obviously be required to pay a price, Minister Rabin said.

[Begin recording] I presume the Syrians will exact of him a pledge of extremist positions that will separate him from Jordan and Egypt as a precondition for allowing him to be active in Syria or in Lebanon beyond the scope of his current activity there. [end recording]

At the same time, Minister Rabin said, it should be borne in mind that the PLO in Lebanon has a sufficiently broad human and military infrastructure to carry out terrorist attacks.

[Begin Rabin recording] I believe that even if Syrian aid is extended—and anyway, it is given to a large number of PLO terrorist organizations active against us, or at least those who try to attack us even today—it will become evident that the measures taken to date cannot properly handle the possibility that Syria will open the door somewhat for 'Arafat's PLO. [end recording]

The defense minister was replying to questions by Rishon Leziyyon 12th graders. He toured the city and was awarded honorary citizenship.

Shultz Plan Blamed for Arab 'Extremist Trend'

TA260626 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Sources in the prime minister's office claim that the Shultz plan created an extremist trend in the Arab world and led to 'Arafat's talks in Damascus and to a toughening of Husayn's positions. People in Jerusalem believe that the U.S. abstention in the UN Security Council vote on Abu-Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] assassination is an expression of George Shultz' personal reservations about the assassination.

Meanwhile Abraham Sofaer, the State Department's legal adviser, is coming to Jerusalem today in a last minute attempt to reach a compromise on the Tabah issue. Our political correspondent 'Oz Frankel reports:

The Israeli political establishment—both parts of it—is following 'Arafat's talks in Damascus with concern. Sources in the prime minister's office claim that the Shultz plan is the cause of the extremist trend in the Arab world and of the PLO-Syrian rapprochement and the toughening of Husayn's positions. The latter is no longer willing to represent the Palestinians in political negotiations. People in the Foreign Ministry retort that had progress been made in the peace process, Husayn would have adhered to the London agreements. Regretfully, however, the peace process is not moving ahead.

Perhaps the same thing can be said regarding the Shultz-Shevardnadze talks. The process is not advancing. Ambassador Pickering will come to Jerusalem today to brief Foreign Minister Peres about the talks held in Moscow. So far it is not known when—if at all—Shultz will return to the region. There are signs indicating that he will not be able to return before June, and this, too, is a sign that there is no breakthrough in the political arena.

A senior political source told me that the assassination of Abu Jihad in Tunisia has accelerated a series of developments which endanger the Shultz initiative as well as Israeli-Egyptian relations. According to the source, Secretary of State Shultz is aware of the negative impact of Abu Jihad's assassination on his political plan, and it was he who ordered the U.S. mission to the United Nations to abstain in yesterday's vote in the Security Council on the Abu Jihad assassination as an expression of his dissatisfaction.

Another development relating to Egypt: Abraham Sofaer, the State Department's legal adviser, today begins a round of talks in Jerusalem and Cairo in a last

minute attempt to find a compromise on the Tabah issue in order to avoid the necessity of resorting to an arbitration verdict. The process of presenting the claims to the arbitrators in Geneva has ended and the arbitrators have announced that they will be ready to submit their decision by May. However, both the arbitrators and the Israeli and Egyptian representatives have recommended that an additional effort to reach a compromise be made.

Rubinstein on U.S. Memorandum of Understanding
TA221317 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Telephone interview with Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein by Mikha Friedman and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Friedman] On the Israeli side, the contacts leading to the signing of the Israeli-U.S. memorandum of understanding were coordinated by Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein. Good morning to you.

[Rubinstein] Good morning.

[Friedman] Although this memorandum is meant to formalize all areas of cooperation between Israel and the United States, it does not include the 1975 U.S. commitment not to negotiate with the PLO. What does this show us?

[Rubinstein] This commitment simply is included in another agreement. This memorandum does not repeat existing agreements, but formalizes issues which had been partly put into practice. All the areas anchored in agreements between Israel and the United States are mentioned in the last section of the memorandum, which says this agreement does not negate previous existing agreements and commitments, of which there are many: the defense establishment's memoranda on technological areas; the 1975 agreement you have just mentioned; the agreement on the Voice of America; the so-called SDI accord; etc. There was no intention of compiling a catalogue of all existing and long-standing agreements, which include memoranda between Israeli and U.S. government ministries of labor and social affairs, health, and education.

[Friedman] We asked you this question because Reagan chose yesterday, of all times, to declare that the United States will continue to meet Palestinian leaders who are willing to talk. So maybe the 1975 understanding does not exist, at least for the United States?

[Rubinstein] No, I do not think this is what we are talking about today. This understanding persists; the United States, including the secretary of state during his visit here, keep saying as much. This is a basic and fundamental understanding, and I do not think it has been altered or changed. President Reagan talks about Palestinian leaders within the framework of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The question of Palestinian representation, of finding Palestinian leaders that are not PLO members and are willing to join such a delegation despite the PLO's threats and terror, is a difficult one.

Anyway, the memorandum signed yesterday does not deal with that, it deals with bilateral issues and not with the peace process. The State of Israel had wanted to formalize these mechanisms for years, but it had never been done before. Any sensible person knows that the formalization of long-standing mechanisms are very important in international relations. If one looks back 40 years, one can see that in 1948 even the very recognition of the State of Israel caused a ferocious struggle within the U.S. Administration, at the end of which President Truman decided in favor of it, contravening the positions of other prominent government agencies. Today, 40 years later, the formalization of understandings in the strategic, economic, and other fields shows that we have come a long way.

In recent years, in fact, Secretary of State George Shultz was one of the main advocates of this move. As you know, the strategic cooperation started in a 1983 meeting held between then Prime Minister Shamir, who is also prime minister today, and President Reagan. The cooperation, which was then declared verbally and is today being formalized in writing, has continued throughout the tenure of the national unity government. I myself can attest to a great deal of progress made in various fields throughout the years. I think everyone agrees this is a positive achievement.

Incidentally, I read in the papers today that the agreement was supposedly reached by the prime minister's office. I am pointing this out because of the particular circumstances pertaining to the Israeli Cabinet: Although the agreement was managed from this office, it was coordinated with the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry, the Treasury, and all elements concerned.

[Dan] Mr Rubinstein, can you tell us for a fact that this memorandum was not used at any stage as some sort of bargaining chip by the United States, as a means of pressuring Israel to accept Shultz' plan? Or was it, perhaps, not that meaningful?

[Rubinstein] To the best of my knowledge it was not. As far as I can tell, and I think this is objectively true, this conforms with Shultz' own concept that bilateral matters should not be linked. The fact is that during the negotiations nobody asked to introduce any declaration about disputed political subjects.

[Friedman] Yesterday, however, in the middle of the signing ceremony, Reagan deemed it proper to say that cooperation with Israel will not be full if Israel does not cooperate in the efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East. So, here we see the President himself linking the two issues.

[Rubinstein] I am glad you brought it up. First of all, under the current international circumstances it is not surprising that these remarks were made. Second, regardless of our differences over methods of achieving peace, how can anybody think that there are people in Israel who are not interested in a peace process and do not regard peace as a strategic aim? I say this because peace has always been prominent with us, and rightly so.

[Dan] You would not, however, go as far as saying that the United States may have come to terms with Israel's rejection of the Shultz plan?

[Rubinstein] I do not want to utter an Israeli refusal of Shultz' plan. There are differences of opinion on some elements of the plan, but the entire government and all the Israeli people agree on the question of U.S. involvement in the peace process in the Middle East and the efforts at making a breakthrough.

[Friedman] You know that political observers look for telltale signs everywhere, and they find that the scheduled ceremonial phone call between Reagan and Shamir was canceled at the last minute with the excuse that there was no time. Could Shamir not find 5 free minutes to talk to the President, or maybe it was the other way around and the American could not find the time?

[Rubinstein] First of all, lack of time is not uncommon. I think that what counts is the matter itself. The fact is that such a formalization of the relations did not exist before. As a man who has participated in and followed the contacts with the United States over the years, I can definitely say this is something we would not have dreamed of attaining a few years ago. If you recall, a few years ago there was an argument about whether mention should be made in our bilateral agreements of international political subjects, such as the Soviet question and other questions.

In the meantime, an existing system has been formalized, not by clerks but by the leaders of the executive branches of both states, the President and the Israeli prime minister. This is the important issue. I think all the rest is of minor importance in the context of the memorandum of understanding.

[Friedman] Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, thank you.

[Rubinstein] You are welcome.

2 IDF Soldiers Killed, 2 Wounded in S. Lebanon

TA261321 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The IDF spokesman announces that two IDF soldiers were killed and two others were wounded this morning, in a clash with a terrorist squad which tried to penetrate Israeli territory near Mount Hermon. The families of the dead soldiers have been notified. Three terrorists were killed in the encounter.

An IDF patrol detected tracks of a terrorist squad on the western slopes of Mount Hermon. A chase ensued with the help of helicopters, and around 0700 [0400 GMT] the IDF force encountered the terrorist squad about 200 meters from the border fence.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the soldiers fought the terrorists, who had been hiding in a thick bush in Israeli territory, from a distance of 2 meters. The IDF soldiers raided the terrorists, who fired an LAW [light antitank weapon] missile and hand grenades.

As reported, four IDF soldiers were hit by the terrorists' fire, and two of them died of their wounds. Our correspondent points out that a military medic treated the soldiers under fire. The chief of staff and the commander of the Northern Command later arrived on the scene of the incident.

Lebanese Work Permits Depend on SLA Recruitment

TA251232 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 25 Apr 88 p 8

[Text] Preparations have already been made in south Lebanon to permit more Lebanese to work in Israel.

ITIM correspondent Shlomo Hadad reports that the IDF liaison unit has begun identifying candidates for construction work in Israel, after a permit was issued by Labor and Social Affairs Minister Moshe Qatzav to hire new Lebanese workers for construction jobs here.

The number of workers to be absorbed in Israel will be jointly determined by the contractors center and the Labor Ministry. South Lebanese Army [SLA] officers estimate that the absorption of more workers will be followed by an increased recruitment to the SLA, since the IDF liaison unit's criteria for work permits in Israel include the recruitment of a relative to the SLA. The purpose of this condition is to strengthen the ties between the Lebanese population and the SLA.

The IDF liaison unit estimates that there are thousands of young Lebanese willing to do any work in Israel, including the hardest construction jobs. It should be noted that 1,000 Lebanese workers are currently employed in Israel, mainly in hotels and agriculture.

Sharon Blocks Vote on Shamir as Likud Leader

TA251550 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 25 Apr 88 p A6

[Report by Menahem Rahat]

[Text] Minister Ari'el Sharon, chairman of the Herut Central Committee, yesterday prevented an attempt by young Herut members to vote in the committee on their

proposal to choose Yitzhaq Shamir unanimously as leader of the Likud Knesset list. Sharon announced that this issue would be raised at a special Central Committee meeting.

Sharon is currently interested in pleasing the Levi camp and joining with it to serve as a counterweight to the Shamir-Arens camp. Sharon himself is not interested in competing for the leadership of the list, and it appears that David Levi is also not interested. For their own reasons the Levi camp wants to postpone the election of the Knesset list and the leadership for as long as possible.

Defense Minister on Unrest Cost, Judicial System

TA261217 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The uprising in the territories cost the IDF 412 million shekels, of which the IDF can absorb 150 million while the remainder will have to come from additional government funds. These figures were presented today by Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

He said the problem in the territories runs deeper than we think. It is a confrontation with a mob. It is not an antiterror operation, but a confrontation with a civilian population, Rabin said.

He sharply attacked the government's judicial system, and said: I am sick and tired of the gossip which is circulating and which has no basis in Israeli law. He criticized the state attorney's office, which refuses to represent the defense establishment in appeals to the High Court of Justice.

Says Unrest Led by 'Squads'

TA261341 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says that the large number of detainees held by the IDF, over 4,900, shows that the riots in the territories are not initiated by a small group of leaders. It is an uprising led by what he called squad and company commanders and not by generals. Rabin said the policy of blockades and curfews were aimed at signaling to the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip that work in Israel is a privilege, and that they do not do us a favor when they go to work.

In his address to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee the defense minister attacked the state attorney's office which he said did not provide assistance to our defense policy. He pointed out that the state attorney's office refused to support the expulsion of three Arab residents of Bayta whom he had decided to deport basing itself on the claim that the decision would be overruled by the High Court of Justice. He said it was inconceivable that the state attorney's office could become a court of law.

Police Commissioner: Censored Affair 'Mishap'

TA261251 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The police commissioner says the affair which Knesset Member Mordekhay Virshubsky calls a police blunder in a security incident was checked and was merely a mishap. Commissioner David Kraus added that following an investigation it was decided to not put policemen on trial for their performance in the affair.

Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the issue was raised today after a short debate by members of the Knesset Internal Affairs and Public Audit Committees on the issue of the police comptroller. The police commissioner reported to the Knesset Members [MK] on the affair and the lessons learned from it.

After the meeting, MK Virshubsky said he still believes it concerned a situation which could have been avoided. He said personal conclusions should be drawn by those involved including the ministerial level. MK's Virshubsky, Ran Kohen, and Dov Shilansky believe the military censor should drop the ban imposed on publication of the details of the affair.

Army Reports Shows Bayta Victim Shot By M-16

TA260436 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The final draft of an army investigation into the attack on Jewish hikers in the Samarian village of Bayta has been completed. The report will be handed to Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and the chief of staff tomorrow, and then to the Inner Cabinet. Steve Rodan reports:

The army report does not differ significantly from earlier drafts. The report determines that Tirtza Porat, the 15-year-old Jewish girl killed in Bayta, was shot dead by an M-16 rifle. The M-16 was that of the armed escort of the Jewish hikers, Romam Aldubi. The report also discounts reports by the Jewish hikers that a Kalashnikov rifle was fired in the village by an Arab standing on a roof. The report also determines that there was no grenade or other explosive charge hurled by the Arabs.

On 6 April, 16 Jewish teenagers, a guide, and Romam Aldubi left for a Passover hike toward Elon More. Near the village of Bayta the hikers came under a hail of stones. Aldubi fired his M-16 to disperse the Arab stone throwers, but the stones kept flying and the crowd got closer. Aldubi shot one Arab who tried, according to the hikers, to snatch the M-16. The news of the Arab's death fired up Bayta villagers, more Arabs arrived, and the Jewish group was surrounded. Several Arab elders then tried to defuse the situation and suggested that the hikers leave the area through Bayta.

In the village, the Arabs asked Aldubi to give his weapon to one of the hikers in order to prevent more shooting, but Aldubi—who spent many years in the army—refused. In Bayta, the group came under attack by hundreds of Arabs, many of whom tried to snatch Aldubi's M-16. The army report said at that point the M-16 went off and killed Tirtza Porat, who stood in front of Aldubi.

Romam Aldubi remains in the intensive care unit of Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital, and his family expressed opposition to the report. Jewish hikers have already condemned the findings and say they apparently match the story given by Bayta residents.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

Stonethrower Given 20 Months

TA251206 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Apr 88 p 7

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[Text] The Gaza Strip military tribunal yesterday sentenced 'Attari 'Isa Iyad, a 15-year-old youth, to 20 months imprisonment, 4 years suspended sentence, and a fine of 2,500 shekels. He was indicted on charges of stoning IDF forces in the Gaza Strip.

The youth's family was astonished at the sentence, and an angry mood is prevailing in his neighborhood of Al-Zaytun.

Some 15 more persons charged with rioting were tried yesterday. They all pleaded guilty and were sentenced to jail terms of 1 to 4 months.

Gazans Barred From Green Line

TA251541 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The Civilian Administration has issued orders to several dozen Gaza Strip residents suspected of incitement and participation in disturbances. According to the decrees, these residents are forbidden to travel inside the Green Line and are obligated to report to the Gaza District police headquarters twice a day. The Civilian Administration has changed these individuals' identity cards. They now bear cards whose color is different from those of the rest of the population. This will make their identification easier.

Rooms Sealed in Gazan Homes

TA260917 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Last night the security forces sealed off four roomsbelonging to people suspected of attacking Israelis and of rioting in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that rooms were sealed in the homes of three youths suspected of attacking a Qiryat Arba' couple and burning their car. Rooms were also sealed in the home of two brothers who admitted to having thrown Molotov cocktails at IDF forces.

Measures Taking 'Initiative'

TA260631 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Apr 88 pp 1, 7

[Report by Bradley Burston]

[Text] Gaza City—Tens of thousands of residents of Gaza refugee camps may be legally restricted to the confines of the Gaza Strip, under new Civilian Administration measures aimed at "taking the initiative" in the area, THE JERUSALEM POST has learned.

Sources close to the Civilian Administration said the recent IDF operation to confiscate the identity cards of adult males in the Al-Shati' and Dayr al-Balah refugee camps was the first stage of the plan, now extended to include residents of Jabalyah, the largest camp in the territories.

Gazans whose ID cards were confiscated were given papers restricting them to the Strip until they fulfilled the requirements of a separate document available for NIS [new Israeli shekels] 5 at the Gaza Interior Ministry offices.

The form contains four spaces which must be stamped by officials of other offices.

To secure the return of their ID cards, residents must undergo separate checks at the income tax, customs, and VAT offices to ascertain that they have paid their taxes in full. Then the police must stamp a section stating that the bearer has no outstanding traffic or other violations. Receipts must also be obtained from the municipality to show that water and electricity bills have been settled. A final section is to be filled in only if the bearer is wanted for interrogation by the security forces.

Yesterday, residents of Dayr al-Balah and some areas of Al-Shati' said they intended to protest against the measures by leaving their cards in the hands of the authorities.

The hundreds of Gazans who attempted to recover their cards yesterday had to stand in long lines at the various offices. Police and tax offices have been operating with skeleton staffs of Israeli clerks since early last month, when local employees resigned en masse.

Restraining orders were issued yesterday against scores of Gazans whose cards had been confiscated and who were suspected of having played active roles in the uprising.

The orders prohibited the bearers from leaving the Strip, and required them to register at the central police station twice daily.

Those served with the restraining orders were also issued with orange identity card folders in place of the light green ones used in the Strip.

It was reported that troops yesterday broke into the offices of the Gaza Bar Association, the Red Crescent Society, and the Palestinian Women's Union, examining and confiscating files.

IDF sources said that records were removed for examination by income tax officials.

But Bar Association president Fayiz Abu Rahmah told THE JERUSALEM POST that the soldiers had taken all of the association's records, including the affidavits signed by hundreds of Gazans alleging irregularities by security forces.

Editorial Examines U.S. 'Failure of Perception'

TA241002 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Apr 88 p 8

[Editorial: "Trophy for Mr Shamir"]

[Text] The ceremonies in Washington and Jerusalem on Independence Day to sign a U.S.-Israel agreement on wide-ranging cooperation were originally billed to receive much greater public display.

President Reagan was supposed to talk to Prime Minister Shamir by phone during the simultaneous happenings with the White House press corps in tow to assure appropriate coverage. But the ardency for celebration of the occasion had apparently waned in Washington.

Instead of dwelling, as Mr. Shamir in Jerusalem, on the significance of the "Memorandum of Agreement," Mr. Reagan chose to emphasize the need to advance peace, which in the context means what is termed the Shultz initiative. There was a message in those American-style subtleties, but Mr. Shamir can afford to ignore it. For with every passing day, the Reagan Administration becomes more and more "a wheel that turns, but turns no other wheels."

This borrowed metaphor is especially appropriate for the administrations's policy on Israel and its neighbours. For when, a year ago and more, they still had bite in their gears, Mr. Reagan and Mr. Shultz chose to ignore the "peace process" then being pursued by Foreign Minister Peres, King Husayn and President Mubarak. Instead, they courted Mr. Shamir, believing that by raising bilateral relations between the U.S. and Israel to a historic pinnacle, they could, whenever so inclined, trade this "confidence-building" support for political flexibility on his part. After all, he was the premier, and only he could "deliver."

Whether by instinct, intellect or both, Mr. Shamir played his cards immaculately. He took everything the administration was ready to give, discredited Mr. Peres to boot, and when the time came to budge a bit, bluffed here and stalled there, in the sure knowledge that the Reagan administreation was effectively finished.

This is not to say that Mr. Shamir deliberatley misled the President and the secretary of state. Quite the contrary. He did not have to, for they misled themselves. Unable, through their blinders, to pierce beyond what they consider Israel's legitimate "obsession" with security, to the ideological and political core of Mr. Shamir's obsession with the land, they confused amiability with pragmatism, obduracy with strength.

The Memorandum of Agreement symbolizes the process. It puts into binding documentary form Israel's status as an ally. It commits not only the Reagan administration, but a future administration as well. It is indeed important for Israel and a signal achievement for Mr. Shamir, even if, as the Foreign Ministry uncharitably claims, the elements of cooperation were all in place before and without the document.

But one of its principal underlying aims, to persuade Israel that with the U.S. solidly at its side, it can afford, for its own sake, to take reasonable risks or peace, lies fallow and unachieved. For risk is not the issue. That can be measured, or at least argued. However, dogma lies beyond argument and beyond persuasion. And it is the security argument deployed on behalf of dogma that turns the wheels in Israel.

Until American policymakers come to grips with that, they will continue to perceive an Israel that long since ceased to exist, a failure of perception, which, if uncorrected, will exact a heavy price from both countries.

Commentary Criticizes Soviet Policy 'Forecasts'

TA25145! Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 25 Apr 88 p A10

[Commentary by Moshe Zaq: "The Director General's Error;" words in boldface as published]

[Text] After he joined the Israeli Communist Party, the late Dr Moshe Sene used to joke: I do not wait for PRAVDA to arrive in Israel by regular mail, as MAPAM members do. I have it sent to me by air mail from Moscow. I immediately read the news and adjust my positions according to the editorial.

Last week, after the U.S. strike at Iranian frigates and oil platforms in the Persian Gulf, PRAVDA accused the United States of being in collusion with Israel and of coordinating the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] in Tunisia to take place simultaneously with the piratical attack on Iranian territory. The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem apparently did not read this invective. The director general hastened to make a statement relying on an early report by Ambassador Moshe Ar'el in Stockholm, according to which in their talks with Kremlin leaders some Swedes received the impression that the

former would be prepared to resume relations with Israel the moment Israel agreed to convene an international conference. On Saturday night, the director general hastened to inform the Israeli nation that an understanding on the convening of a conference in mid-May would be reached in talks in Moscow between the Soviet foreign minister and the U.S. secretary of state.

This prediction is based on the premise that the two superpowers are moving toward a comprehensive settlement of Middle East problems, which would include cooperation once the Gulf war ends. The Soviets, however, did not consult Israeli prognosticators. They have different considerations: The Soviet Union is not rushing to heal the rift between Iran and the United States, but wants to take advantage of it—just as it is not prepared to strengthen the U.S. position in the region by supporting Shultz' plan unless the United States promises to divide up influence in the region on equal terms. Had the director general of the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem read PRAVDA's article about Israeli-U.S. collusion he would not have rushed to predict an imminent U.S.-Soviet agreement on an international conference, only to be disillusioned 48 hours later.

The possibility cannot be dismissed that these "forecasts" are the result of a certain distress the Foreign Ministry has shown following the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between Israel and the United States. On the eve of the signing of the memorandum a certain official in the Foreign Ministry criticized the United States for signing an agreement while Shamir "continues to display toughness despite Shultz' pleas." On the day after the signing, Foreign Ministry officials told THE JERUSALEM POST that the memorandum is "superfluous." Shim'on Peres is too wise to say such stupid things. He knows how to evaluate the great importance of the 5-year agreement.

This is not the case with some of his aides, who in briefings claimed distortedly that the agreement is not important and that its implementation depends on acceptance of the Shultz plan. This is not true. The agreement does not have any conditions attached. The administration's announcement that it is sticking to the Shultz plan was aimed at reassuring the Arabs who protested about the agreement.

The false conception that any Israeli-Arab arrangement is dependent on a Soviet-U.S. agreement caused a deliberate devaluation in Israeli-U.S. agreements that were finalized by the memorandum. This conception led to a wave of predictions about an expected change in the USSR's attitude toward Israel.

One of these is that the USSR will announce the resumption of relations with Israel the moment preparations for the international conference begin, despite Gromyko's 1973 announcement to Abba Eban in Geneva that the renewal of relations depends on a real advancement in negotiations in Geneva.

In fact, a similar type of proposal was raised as far back as September 1977. Two Soviet emissaries came to the prime minister's residence, promising him a resumption in ties in return for a return to the Geneva conference—on Soviet terms. Menahem Begin rejected their offer.

The Soviets have now returned to this formula after realizing that the United States is basing itself on the Israeli prime minister's opposition to an international conference. They are trying to soften up Israel's opposition with small gestures and lots of smiles. On the other hand, the Soviet foreign minister does not hide his intentions by explaining that Shamir knows his condition for visiting Israel. The condition, known to Shamir, is agreement on the internationalization of the Israeli-Arab conflict through an international conference. This, rather than being aimed at settling the Israeli-Arab conflict, is meant to assure the USSR its long sought after partnership with the United States in the Middle East.

The signing of the Israeli-U.S. memorandum is seen differently in the Foreign Ministry in Moscow from the way it is viewed in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. It is seen as evidence of U.S. determination to support Israel. Moscow will certainly take into account the fact that the United States has not been put off from signing the memorandum despite Arab protests, and it will understand that it will not be able "to buy" Israel with "a potage of diplomatic relations." [Biblical reference]

The Soviets are more sophisticated than the forecasters in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem and they will not look for pretexts before denigrating the value of the agreement between Jerusalem and Washington. The memorandum will be ratified at the end of the week in an exchange of documents. Each copy will be countersigned, and one page will be replaced in which a mistake was made in the translation of the State Department component which deals with foreign aid. Mixups should not be a basis for a stupid attempt to transfer the focus from the **existing** fact of an agreement with **Washington**, which is a real achievement, to a **supposition** of an expected change by Moscow, which is still an inducement.

Syria Accused of Tripoli Car Bomb Explosion

NC231232 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has denounced what it called the cowardly criminal action targeted against dozens of innocent people in Tripoli today, accusing Syrian intelligence services of placing the car bomb in the Bab al-Tabbanah area of Tripoli. The organization has issued a statement declaring that the Syrian occupation army resorts to such methods whenever it feels impotent, as it did before in the Al-Qubbah, Al-Mina', and Abu Samra' areas of Tripoli.

The statement adds that Syria has failed to end the growing resistance, so it has turned its hatred against the people of Bab al-Tabbanah, which—according to the statement—has been and still is the stronghold of the mujahidin.

9 February Organization Claims Attack on Syrians

NC221439 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has announced that one of its groups used hand grenades in an attack on a Syrian occupation army post at Al-Tall Square in Tripoli last night. A spokesman for the organization said the Syrian forces brought the area under intense fire and arrested a number of people.

2d Assault Reported

NC221524 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has announced that one of its groups fired a number of rockets at a Syrian occupation army center in the Al-Makhadah area of Al-Minyah in the North at 2200 yesterday.

Syrian Forces Dismantled Car Bomb in Tripoli

NC221957 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] In its latest issue, AL-MASIRAH magazine reports that 2 weeks ago Syrian occupation forces dismantled an explosive charge in a BMW parked at Al-Tall Square in Tripoli. Brigadier General Hashim al-Mu'alla, commander of Syrian special units in Lebanon, was expected to pass through the area.

AL-MASIRAH also cites a security official as expecting anti-security actions in the south and in Tripoli against some officials. The same security official noted that a meeting has taken place between Islamic Unification Movement leader Sa'id Sha'ban and members of Fatah—The Revolutionary Council, led by Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna], during which they drew up general guidelines for moves in the Tripoli area.

3 Killed in Attempt To Infiltrate Into Israel

NC261027 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] According to security sources, a clash took place this morning between an Israeli Army patrol and gunmen who were trying to infiltrate into Israel from south Lebanon. Three gunmen were killed and three Israeli soldiers were wounded, the sources added.

4 Injured in Attack on Lahd Militiamen 24 Apr

NC251711 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] National resistance fighters detonated a 40-kg explosive charge while an M-113 armored personnel carrier driven by agent Lahd militiamen was passing on the 'Arab Salim-Sahl al-Mi'dhanah Road last night. While Lahd radio reported that the blast left one person injured, security sources in the area said that the explosion completely destroyed the vehicle and seriously wounded four crew members, who were immediately taken to Marj 'Uyun Hospital.

New Resistance Group Claims Attack in South

NC221859 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] An NNA correspondent has reported that a group from the Lebanese resistance front detonated an explosive charge as an agent militia patrol was passing on the Shwayya-Shib'a Road this morning. The resistance group attacked the patrol with rockets and machineguns. The NNA correspondent added that two Israeli helicopters flew over the scene 30 minutes after the operation took place.

Meanwhile, the Arab Revolutionary Change Movement [Harakat al-Taghyir al-Thawri al-'Arabi] has claimed responsibility for the operation, which left a vehicle destroyed and its passengers dead or wounded. The movement added that one of the resistance fighters was seriously wounded. The agent radio has admitted the operation and losses, but did not mention the number of casualties.

5 Wounded in Clash With Amal; Gunmen Caught

NC260617 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Gunmen in a civilian car have used machineguns and hand grenades to attack an Amal center in the village of Al-Qusaybah in the south, wounding five people. Amal members gave chase and arrested the vehicle's passengers. They are: Khalil Fahs, Ghalib Bishikr, and Mahmud al-Jurmuqi.

Iranians Continue Contacts With Shi'ite Leaders

Birri Reacts to Proposal

NC231344 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Asked for his opinion on the proposal made by the head of the Iranian delegation that a committee be formed to deal with what happened in the south, Nabih Birri, minister and leader of the Amal movement, has said: The proposal made by the eminent brother, Ayatollah Jannati, was presented without our knowledge. This matter was not discussed with the movement's delegation, which visited the ayatollah to congratulate him on his safe arrival. In any case, we are now studying this proposal.

Iranian Embassy Statement

NC252051 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Amal movement leader Minister Nabih Birri, accompanied by Dr Ayyub Humayyid and Ahmad Husayn, met with the Iranian delegation led by Ayatollah Jannati at the Iranian Embassy in Beirut this evening. Iranian Ambassador Ahmad Dastmalchian also attended the meeting.

A statement issued by the Iranian Embassy notes that the talks during the meeting dealt with developments in the Islamic world in general and the Islamic arena in Lebanon in particular, especially the recent events which took place between the brothers in the south. The statement affirms that the conferees agreed to consolidate the Islamic rank and arena to avert any divisive trends.

Clerics Laud Mediation

LD252006 Tehran IRNA in English 1537 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Beirut, April 25, IRNA—Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati in his efforts to end Lebanon's internecine clashes held talks with prominent alim Allameh Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah and vice-chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite Assembly, Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, Sunday.

The Iranian delegation led by Ayatollah Jannati, member of the Council of Guardians, is here since a week to patch up differences between Lebanese Hizballah and the Amal movement. Jannati discussed with the two revered figures Iran's proposal to set up a 5-man committee to iron out existing differences under the supervision of the Islamic Republic.

Both Shaykh Shams al-Din and Sayyid Fadlallah lauded Iran's tireless endeavors to solve the internecine disputes and announced their readiness to cooperate with Iran in this regard.

Meanwhile, in related developments the Iranian ambassador here Ahmad Dastmalchian met head of the Amal movement Nabih Birri to discuss the issue.

Sources close to the Iranian delegation said since the unity of Lebanese Muslims is of prime importance, Ayatollah Jannati will continue his talks in Beirut till the dispute is solved.

The sources said that all parties welcomed Iran's proposals and sincerely hoped that such regrettable incidents would never happen again.

President Notes Attempts To 'Defame' Country

NC221921 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] President Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil has said that the Lebanese people are not responsible for every act of violence committed against international airports and institutions.

In an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS, Al-Jumayyil noted that Lebanon has become an issue expoited by many people to accomplish individual goals and defame Lebanon, its interests, and its people.

Lebanese Forces Official on Al-Wazir Murder

NC221526 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Dr Tawfiq al-Hindi, political adviser to the Lebanese Forces commander, has called on all Lebanese parties to rally around the slogan of liberation from all occupation. He warned against repeating the mistakes of the past—a result of the policies of certain parties—which could lead to relinking the Lebanese issue to the region's conflicts.

Al-Hindi noted that the assassination of Palestinian official Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] has weakened Yasir 'Arafat on the one hand, but allowed him to emerge as the strongest Palestinian leader on the other. Abu Jihad's assassination, he noted, has given momentum to the PLO, which has no choice but to once again step up action against Israel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, across Lebanon, and perhaps even beyond. Al-Hindi expressed the view that such a move will embarass everyone and limit Syria's ability to confront 'Arafat in Lebanon through the Palestinian National Salvation Front or through a renewal of the camps war. This may prompt Syria to reconcile with the PLO, he added.

Forged Passports Used in Al-Wazir Assassination

NC231500 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Lebanese Ambassador in Tunis Sulayman Farah has said that the available information about the three Lebanese passports used during the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] in Tunis indicates they were

forged and that the names appearing in them were fictitious. He emphasized that no persons with such names had entered Tunis, but that the passports were brought into Tunis and were only used to secure rental cars.

He also said that investigations prove that Israel had intervened by air and sea, and that Israeli material used in the operation will be displayed at the United Nations.

Ambassador Farah has returned to Beirut from Tunis to hold consultations with Foreign Ministry officials, especially in the wake of the assassination and the use of Lebanese passports during one phase of the assassination operation.

Junblatt Rejects Cabinet Role, Views Elections

NC231313 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Differences, among parties in what is called the national ranks, clearly appeared today on the pages of newspapers and magazines. Minister Walid Junblatt has said that after 6 February 1984 the Syrians forced him to become a minister in the present government. However, today he is returning to his original position, which rejects cooperation with President Amin al-Jumayyil and the Phalangists. He said: The Syrians possess numerous means to force me to participate in a new government, but this time I will refuse. I might nominate one of my advisers to participate in the government, but I will refuse, he asserted.

In an interview with L'ORIENT LE JOUR newspaper, Junblatt added that he did not consult his allies in West Beirut on the nomination of Antoine al-Ashqar for the Presidency because they did not and do not want to consult with him. He noted the existence of a big gap between the parties in West Beirut regarding constitutional reforms and even alliances.

Asked whether he nominated Al-Ashqar to underline his independent position, Junblatt said yes. Asked also whether this is being interpreted by the allies as treason, he said: I do not care what they think.

Asked about the reaction of PSP deputy leader Muhsin Dallul to the nomination of Al-Ashqar, Junblatt said: At one time Muhsin Dallul was a member of the party. Today, I no longer know. Ask him.

He affirmed that he opposes the principle of numerical democracy, which is just a theory. Minister Birri's proposal regarding rotation among the president of the Republic, the Chamber of Deputies speaker, and the prime minister is the last thing I care about, he said.

In an interview with AL-ANWAR newspaper, Junblatt announced that he accepts a sectarian solution temporarily. But, he said, we want true power sharing through the Cabinet.

Asked about his relations with Minister Birri, he said: Birri wants detente before the presidential elections, and we say it is impossible to achieve detente with the Phalangists.

Minister Birri, in turn, said in an interview with AL-SHIRA' that after experience he is careful to have personal friendly relations with Minister Junblatt and nothing more. He said he has no stomach for Walid Junblatt.

Al-Huss Seeks Reopening of Beirut Crossings

NC251237 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss sent a letter to Defense Minister 'Adil 'Usayran today saying that the crossing points between the two sectors of the capital should be opened as a preliminary step toward the complete elimination of the so-called contact lines. In his letter, Acting Prime Minister al-Huss remarked that there is talk of tolls being levied on trucks to facilitate their passage through the crossing points, adding that this should be investigated as it is against the law.

A copy of the letter has been sent to Interior Minister Dr 'Abdallah al-Rasi.

President al-Asad Telephones King Husayn 25 Apr
JN252025 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad phoned King Husayn of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at noon today. They discussed Arab issues.

Further on Syrian-PLO Meetings in Damascus

'Arafat Chairs Meeting
LD251421 Kuwait KUNA in English 1315 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, April 25 (KUNA)—Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization Yasir 'Arafat Monday presided over a second meeting of the leaderships of the different Palestinian ranks to review issues to be discussed during 'Arafat's meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad here.

The meeting was attended by members of Fatah Central Committee, Salah Khalaf, Faruq Qaddumi, Salim al-Za'nun, Hani al-Hasan, Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, and Rafiq al-Natshah, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine George Habash, Secretary General of the the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine Nayif Hawatimah and Secretary General of Palestine Liberation Front Talat Ya'qub.

Habash told reporters following the meeting that talks were centered on main issues to be discussed during 'Arafat-Al-Asad meeting expected to be held later today.

He stressed on the determination of the Palestinian leadership to benefit from such "a rare historical opportunity" to restore Syrian-Palestinian relations.

In response to a question, Habash said the meeting between the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinmian National Salvation Front (PNSF) is possible, particularly that the talks with Al-Asad will deal with the Palestinian position on a number of central questions regarding a peace settlement.

In the meantime, Hawatimah told reporters that the PLO-Egyptian relations were also discussed during the meeting, but he gave no further details but that "it is one of the important topics that were discussed today."

Asked about the PLO-PNSF relations, Hawatimah said according to resolutions of the National Council meeting in Algiers last year, a four-man committee was established to hold direct dialogue with PNSF. He added, "We are still ready for such a dialogue."

Hawatimah described the proposed 'Arafat-Al-Asad meeting as an assential matter to solve all suspended issues before the Reagan-Gorbachev summit. The Syrian-Palestinian cohesion is the corner stone of every move, said Hawatimah adding that the Palestinians are ready for a dialogue to reach the results that would support the Palestinian uprising.

Algiers VOP Report
LD251835 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] On the 2d day of his visit in the Syrian capital, Damascus, the brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, chaired a Palestinian meeting grouping several members of the Fatah Executive Committee headed by Brother Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, in addition to several members of the Executive Committee and other Palestinian leaders.

According to a responsible Palestinian source, the Palestinian leadership, under the chairmanship of Brother Abu 'Ammar, examined developments in the Palestinian arena and ways of reinforcing and consolidating Arab solidarity in order to lay down firm bases for Palestinian-Arab relations so as to serve the interests of our Palestinian people and the peoples of our Arab nation, and also to enable them to confront the dangers facing the Arab nation.

They also discussed the situation in the occupied homeland in light of the escalation of the blessed popular uprising against Zionist arbitrariness, terrorism, and crimes.

In addition, Brother Abu 'Ammar will hold talks with a number of senior Syrian officials, foremost among them the Syrian president. According to a responsible Palestinian source, Palestinian-Syrian contacts, consultations, and meetings will continue aimed at drawing up a unified plan for future relations between the two sides and for political action in the coming period, as the Palestinian source put it. The same source indicated that the meetings held between the two sides have removed many obstacles and have erased the state of estrangement and rupture that have prevailed for the past 5 years.

The source added that Brother Abu al-Lutf, head of the PLO Political Department, is expected to meet with the Syrian president prior to the summit meeting between the brother leader Abu 'Ammar and the Syrian president.

Al-Asad, 'Arafat Confer
JN252032 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2015 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1700 today Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman; and Salah Khalaf; Faruq Qaddumi; Salim

al-Za'nun; Muhammad Ratib Ghunaym; Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid; Rafiq al- Natshah; and Hani al-Hasan. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting.

The discussion dealt with the Arab and Palestinian situation, particularly the popular uprising against the Israeli occupation in the occupied Arab territories and the importance of supporting it.

Al-Asad Meets Al-Kharrubi

LD252200 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Today, in Damascus, President Hafiz al-Asad received Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, inspector general of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces. After the meeting, which was attended by Brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, Syrian vice president, President al-Asad received brother Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee.

Col Mustafa al-Kharrubi and Brother 'Arafat arrived in Damascus yesterday.

It is noteworthy that Brother Yasir 'Arafat expressed his pleasure over his visit the Great Jamahiriyah and his talks about the preoccupations of the Arab homeland and the aspirations of the masses of the Arab nation. Beore leaving Tripoli international airport he told JANA that during his visit he discussed developments in the Arab region and Middle East. Views were united about exerting efforts and doing everything possible to support the revolution of the Arab people in occupied Palestine and to support the resistance in Lebanon, which faces repeated Zionist aggression in its southern region.

In his statement to JANA, Brother Yasir 'Arafat pointed out that it was stressed that the revolutionary force in the Arab homeland should shoulder its historic and pan-Arab responsibilities in order to face up to imperialist challenges, which aim to work against the destiny, future, and existence of the Arab nation.

Khaddam Receives 'Arafat

JN261129 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam received PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat today. The talks revolved around the situation in the Palestinian arena, and the development of the popular uprising against the Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab territories, and means to support it. The talks also dealt with the general situation in the region.

Meeting Termed 'Positive'

LD261109 Kuwait KUNA in English 0951 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, April 26 (KUNA)—Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization Yasir 'Arafat left here Tuesday after concluding a three-day visit to Syria.

During his stay in Damascus, the Palestinian leader conferred with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam on Syrian-Palestinian ties, the situation inside the PLO and means of supporting the Palestinian uprising in the occupied lands in addition to matters related to the peace plan of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and the proposed extraordinary Arab summit.

'Arafat, who was expelled from Syria in 1983, said his meeting with Khaddam earlier today was held in a positive atmosphere.

Several members of the Central Committee of Fatah movement have stayed in Damascus to follow up reconciliation efforts between the PLO and two main opposition groups, based in Syria.

Hawatimah Issues Statement

LD261118 Algiers APS in English 1016 GMT 26 Apr 88

["Statement of Hawatimah"—APS headline]

[Text] Damascus, 26/4/88 (APS)—Nayif Hawatimah said there is more and more entente and comprehension between Syria and PLO which have witnessed cold in their relations these past five years.

The secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) said following the meeting between the Syrian president and a Palestinian delegation led by Yasir 'Arafat, that "this meeting was a capital factor for healthy sound relations between us".

We face important events, he carried on, the uprising in occupied territories, the Shultz plan and the Arab summit. We have to settle all these problems before the Reagan-Gorbachev summit scheduled for next May. He also said a dialogue among the different Palestinian factions was necessary.

As for points discussed with President al-Asad he said they focused mainly on the uprising in the occupied territories and ways of strengthening it.

'Arafat Leaves for UAE

JN260915 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0900 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] It has been learned from a Palestinian source in Damascus that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat left Damascus today for Abu Dhabi following a 2-day visit to Syria, during which he met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad after 5 years of differences.

The Palestinian source pointed out that Abu Dhabi is the first station in a tour of the Gulf region by 'Arafat.

Further on Departure

JN261402 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Louis Faris report from Damascus]

[Text] This morning, Yasir 'Arafat, accompanied by Salah Khalaf, also known as Abu Iyad, left Damascus airport for Libya following a meeting held with Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam at the latter's office. The meeting was attended, besides 'Arafat, by members of the Fatah Movement's Central Committee.

Following the meeting, 'Arafat announced to the journalists the results of his talks in Damascus and termed them useful and cordial. He added that the results of these talks on both the Palestinian and Arab levels were positive.

An important meeting was held at the Al-Rawdah Palace, 'Arafat's place of residence, last night. The meeting was attended by the Palestinian leaders: the Fatah Movement's Central Committee members, PFLP leaders George Habash and Abu 'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah, Palestine Liberation Front leader Tal'at Ya'qub, Palestinian Communist Party leader Sulayman al-Najjab, and Palestinian Struggle Front [PSF] leader Dr Samir Ghawshah. Libyan envoy Mustafa al-Kharrubi also attended the meeting.

In a remarkable development, PSF spokesman Khalid 'Abd al-Majid said that a bilateral meeting was held between 'Arafat and Dr Ghawshah in the presence of their aides. He added that during the meeting, they discussed ways to achieve a comprehensive national unity and enhance relations with Syria. In reply to a question on whether a reconciliation was secured between the PSF and the Fatah Movement, 'Abd al-Majid answered: Yes. He also called for initiating a comprehensive inter-Palestinian dialogue, in which all revolution factions must participate.

Last night, 'Arafat also received Samih Abu Kuwayk, also known as Qadri, who participated in leading the dissension within the Fatah Movement 5 years ago. Another meeting was held between Libyan envoy Mustafa al-Kharrubi and Nayif Hawatimah this morning. Following the meeting held last night, a number of those attending the meeting said that the Palestinian leadership discussed the results of the talks held by 'Arafat and the Fatah Movement delegation with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad.

All those attending the meeting highly valued these results, which turned a new page in bilateral relations that have been severed for the past 5 years. They highly appreciated the stands adopted by President al-Asad and paid tribute to the steps he has taken to bolster Syrian-Palestinian relations. They also praised the steps taken by President al-Asad to enhance and support the uprising being staged in the occupied territories.

On the meeting, Hani al-Hasan said that President al-Asad spoke with positive paternal sentiments and chivalry. Rafiq al-Natshah said: I did not feel that I was sitting with the Syrian president. I actually felt that I was sitting with a great leader of pan-Arabism.

In a related development, Umm Jihad [Intisar al-Wazir], widow of martyr Khalil al-Wazir, left Damascus for Amman today after visiting her husband's tomb to spend 3 days accepting condolences on the death of her husband in the Jordanian capital. Fatah Central Committee members Salim al-Za'nun and Rafiq al-Natshah left with her.

Four Fatah Central Committee members, Faruq Qaddumi, Hani al-Hasan, Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, and Abu Mahir [Muhammad Ratib Ghunaym], stayed in the Syrian capital to continue the contacts with the Syrian side as agreed upon to draw up the arrangements and the bases for organizing Fatah-Syrian relations and to reach an agreement on the details on joint Syrian-Palestinian action in the agreed upon areas, especially supporting the uprising, encircling the U.S. initiative, enhancing Palestinian national unity, and mutual coordination of stands prior to the convening of the emergency Arab summit scheduled to be held in Algiers in the beginning of June.

Minister Describes Oil Industry Developments

PM221139 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Apr 88 p 5

[Interview with Oil and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Antonius Habib by Walid Najm in Damascus; date not specified]

[Text] [Najm] Can you give us an idea of the new oil discoveries in Syria?

[Habib] I do not think that anyone at present can give a stable picture of the new oil discoveries in Syria. It is sufficient to point out in this regard that the new oil discoveries in Syria are regarded as very promising, which will enhance our economic situation. Every day we can expect new oil reports. However, that does not mean we will immediately utilize these discoveries. The

important thing is that we in Syria regard the oil as one of the most important resources that should be used in order to realize ambitious development programs.

[Najm] Where are these promising fields? And, what about production?

[Habib] The fields are in the region of Deyr al-Zawr. Production estimates go back to the estimate of oil reserves from the newly discovered wells.

[Najm] However, we have read reports in Western, Arab, and even Syrian newspapers that OPEC sources have confirmed that Syria has attained the status of a big oil exporter. Is that true?

[Habib] No such report has emanated from any government quarter in Syria.

[Najm] Do you intend to join OPEC?

[Habib] The matter is linked, on the one hand, to the exploitation of our oil resources and our efficacy in the international oil market and, on the other, to the future development of the OPEC states' position.

[Najm] What about your presence in OAPEC?

[Habib] We are members of OAPEC; and we regard this Arab organization as one of the most important pan-Arab organizations. It should be supported so as to unify the policies and positions of its Arab member states.

[Najm] You have spoken about natural gas resources in Syria. Is there scope for exporting a portion of it?

[Habib] I mentioned that natural gas has appeared as a new resource in Syria. We will make use of our natural resources for the good of our people and the Arab nation. When our current production of gas exceeds domestic need, then we will undoubtedly export it.

There is a new trend in Syria toward using natural gas instead of liquid fuel in generating electricity for use in factories and heating, as well as in the processing industry. However, we still need to produce more natural gas.

[Najm] Apart from the areas of new oil discoveries, are there any other areas in which new discoveries are about to be made?

[Habib] I mentioned that we are expecting new oil reports in Syria. Our land is promising. In a nutshell, all the regions in Syria show promise of oil.

[Najm] What is the future for Syrian oil?

[Habib] Any prediction about the future is to be regarded with caution, so we in Syria adopt approaches that require our resources to be used in the interests of our people and our nation; and we will make every effort in order to achieve this goal. We possess the flexibility to adapt to international oil policy in a way that will achieve our goals.

[Najm] With all the hopes for oil, we note that Syrian oil cadres are tending to scatter abroad, especially engineers and technicians. How do you explain that?

[Habib] We are indeed suffering the emigration of Syrian oil cadres abroad. However, we do not regard it as a drain: It is a movement from one Arab country to another. Moreover, we have been able to compensate for it by new cadres. There is a large number of engineers returning to the Syrian oilfields. We welcome them and they will definitely find a fresh welcome on their return to the fields we have established.

[Najm] Let us go back to the oil fields. What about service contract companies working in them?

[Habib] We have signed contracts with foreign companies of different nationalities to drill for oil and to produce it. These contracts have been termed service contracts because the companies are proffering the necessary investments for oil exploration and production.

In exchange for these services, they receive compensation for their efforts as well as a portion of the oil or its value, according to what the government decides. The contracting companies here receive all their rights, either in kind or in cash.

2 Booby-Trapped Cars Found in Latakia

NC252002 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 195 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] A local news agency has cited reliable sources as saying that two booby-trapped cars were discovered in Latakia 2 weeks ago. The devices were deactivated a few hours before they were due to detonate. The Syrian military authorities arrested a large number of people for interrogation amid a total news blackout.

Commentary Criticizes U.S. 'Intransigence'

JN231510 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1131 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Aside from the United States, no country in the world has surrendered in writing its sovereign rights to chart its foreign policy. No other country has made its foreign policy in a given region subordinate to the will of a foreign power as the United States has given control of its Mideast policies to the rulers of Israel.

When U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz reiterated the U.S. commitment to Israel's anti-peace Mideast policy by emphasizing Washington's adherence to Israel's three anti-peace no's—specifically: no to an

Israeli pullout from occupied land; no to a Palestinian state; and no to the PLO—he was thus consecrating Henry Kissinger's innovation of conceding to Israeli rulers the right to plan U.S. Mideast policies and documenting them with constraints imposed by Israel.

When the U.S. Administration asserts that it is working for Mideast peace within the framework of a balanced settlement, it is contradicting itself. The three no's espoused by the U.S. Administration make it impossible for the United States to work for a just peace and even-handed settlement. Just how can a just peace be put in place when the aggressor Israel is allowed to forcibly annex other peoples' territory contrary to UN resolutions?

How can justice be administered if the territory of the victim of aggression is wrested from it to be ceded to the aggressor? Can any nation conceivably aquiesce to part of its territory being wrested and sit idly by and call that action peaceful? Those who call for the wresting of territory and its annexation by the aggressor sow the seeds of war in the region.

The second no to which the United States adheres is its opposition to the Palestinian state and by extension to the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. Any dispassionate observer of the Mideast crisis and its ramifications must conclude that the crux of the Mideast problem is the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people and that short of their recognition regional peace and a solution will remain elusive. These rights include the right to self-determination and an independent state on Palestinian soil.

The United States, which observed the 40th anniversary of the founding of the racist, aggressive Zionist entity as if it were an American state by signing a new memo of understanding with Israel bearing President Reagan's and Prime Minister Shamir's names, boasted through its President and other senior U.S. officials that it was the first nation to recognize the Zionist entity minutes after Israel's creation was announced.

Had the United States been honest and evenhanded, it would have acknowledged that the UN General Assembly's resolution partitioning Palestine provided for a Palestinian Arab state and that the resolution whereby Israel was admitted into the UN membership stipulated the establishment of a Palestinian state and repatriation of the Palestinians to their homes.

How can the United States contend that it is working for peace when it violates the fundamentals of peoples' rights of self-determination and UN resolutions and contributes to the crimes against a people that want nothing more than recognition of their rights to self-determination and a state on their own land?

The third no to which the United States clings is opposition to the PLO. Washington's intransigence on that score highlights the U.S. Administration's assertions that it recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinians while simultaneously exposing the joint effort by Washington and Tel Aviv to determine Palestinian representatives and which Palestinians are qualified to speak on behalf of their countrymen. It is inconceivable that any people on earth would agree to surrender to their enemies the right to choose their own representatives.

The U.S. Administration's talk linking the PLO with violence is so much slander: Whoever has had their rights usurped, their land occupied, and has been the target of war crimes and genocide is entitled to struggle against conquerors and usurpers. This legitimate right has been recognized by international law and is respected by all people. It has also been used by people, including the people of the United States. Had the American people not resorted to violence in their struggle for independence the United States would have remained to this day a British colony, and neither President Reagan nor George Shultz would hold office today.

Far from advancing the peace process, entrusting the U.S. Mideast policies to Israel sets it back. Nor does it give the United States the credentials to work for regional peace. Indeed it makes nonsense of all U.S. assertions that Washington is working for peace. The memo of understanding that Reagan and Shamir signed, over and above a string of U.S. written commitments to Israel, is a virtual, formal U.S. declaration of support for Israel and its policies—more specifically support for aggression, occupation, the usurpation of other peoples' rights, and rebellion against the international community.

Thus all U.S. claims of neutrality on the Mideast dispute become hollow. U.S. peace proposals and protestations of concern for peace are equally empty. The U.S. Administration thus becomes wholly responsible for all the criminal actions committed by Israel and joins the anti-Arab camp.

The Arab response to the hostile U.S. posture must measure up to the U.S. bias toward Israel and be translated from rhetoric to action if we are to impress on the United States that its interests and position in the Arab region can never advance against the background of its pro-Israel, anti-Arab policies. Closure of Arab ranks on a platform of rejecting U.S. trusteeship and Israeli hegemony and capitulation to aggression marks the first step along the path of defending peace and the rights and dignity of the Arab nation.

Syria has consistently sought to close Arab ranks and has extended its hand to all those who want to take the course of liberating land, recovering usurped rights, and defeating the plans of forcing capitulation and indignity on the Arabs.

AL-BA'TH Cited on U.S. 'Escalation' in Gulf

JN250825 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 25 Apr 88

[From the press review]

[Text] On the U.S. escalation in the Gulf, AL-BA'TH says: The United States has returned to the pretext of defending navigation in the Gulf to escalate tension in order to maintain a constant appropriate atmosphere for direct intervention in the region's affairs. The recent unprovoked U.S. aggression against Iran entailed dangerous indications that necessitate being alert to what is being concocted behind the scenes as well as to the ultimate need to confront it.

In an attempt to shed more light on these indications and the new plot they entail against our nation, a link must be established between the U.S. diplomacy's endeavor to circumvent the revolution of our kinfolk in the occupied land and continued coordination between Washington and the Zionist enemy and the hireling regime in Iraq.

AL-BA'TH adds: The U.S. alliance with the Iraqi regime has worked persistently to divert attention from the heroic uprising. It also escalated the war, showed complete disregard for the intensive international efforts to settle the Gulf issue, and fanned the fires of the crazy war against the Iranian revolution. An important point that comes to mind here is the repeated U.S. threats to Iran—threats that were repeated by the bloody regime in Iraq and prove further alliance with the Reagan administration.

AL-BA'TH continues: While expecting further escalation, we do not rule out a premeditated aggression prepared by Washington in which it might participate through the intensification of its military presence in the Gulf. It is an aggression expected not only against Iran, but also against all those who hoist the flag of Palestine, support the kinfolk's uprising, and affirm determination to secure its continuation until victory is achieved.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Attends Revolution Anniversary Gala

LD260730 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0500 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 25, BAKHTAR—The tenth anniversary celebration of the April Revolution as a historic event in Afghanistan was celebrated here in a joint gala function organised by the Presidency of the Republic of Afghanistan and the alliance of left-wing democratic parties with the participation of Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan and general secretary of the PDPA CC today.

Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister, Politburo members and members of the Secretariate of the PDPA CC, Abdurrahim Hatif, chairman of the Central Council of the National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan; the leading members of the Revolutionary Organisation of the Working People of Afghanistan, ROWPA, the Organisation of the Working People of Afghanistan, OWPA, the Islamic Party of the People of Afghanistan, the Peasants Justice Party of Afghanistan and members of the Revolutionary Council and Council of Ministers, members of the social organisations, the high-ranking officers of the armed forces, deputies and senators of the National Assembly and the guest delegations from the foreign countries and members of the corp diplomatic of the friendly countries in Kabul participated at the function.

At the outset of the function, the participants kept a minute silence in honour of the martyres of (?the path) of the April Revolution.

President Najibullah delivered a comprehensive speech on the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution and its gains.

Vladimir Orlov, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federative Republic and head of the Soviet delegation in his speech delivered at the function congratulated the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution to the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Afghan people and wished further successes for the national democratic April Revolution, the policy of national reconciliation for ensuring a nation-wide peace in Afghanistan.

Similarly, the head of delegation of Cuba, and member of the Secretariate of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, Fernandez in his speech delivered at the function expressed the support of the Communist Party of Cuba, government and people of that country to the April Revolution, policy of national reconciliation and other peaceful measures adopted by the Republic of Afghanistan.

Later, President Najibullah in his concluding speech explained the political significance of the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution at the present conditions of the Afghan society.

Delegations from the Soviet union, the German Democratic Republic, Cuba, the People's Republic of Poland, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Socialist Republic of Romania, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Austria, Nicaragua and India participated in the ceremonies marking the 10th anniversary celebration of the April Revolution.

April Revolution Anniversary Parade Broadcast

LD261100 [Editorial Report] Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto at 0320 GMT on 26 April begins broadcasting a live radio and television relay from Independence Avenue in Kabul of the military parade marking the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution. Announcers speaking Pashto and Dari alternate in describing the festivities.

At 0322 GMT, President Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, arrives and inspects a guard of honor. He takes his seat at 0327 GMT.

At 0328 GMT, Brigadier General Muhammad Rafi', minister of national defense, arrives. He receives assurance from the general commander of the parade that all participating units are ready to begin. Rafi' reviews the following parade units by car, congratulating each on the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution: 1) pupils of the military school, 2) officers undergoing the higher training course, 3) students from the military university, 4) students from the military political university, 5) air and air defense university students, 6) students of the people's militia technical school, 7) students of the military music school, 8) assault units, 9) special state security guards, 10) border forces, 11) militia units, 12) women's revolutionary defense units, 13) units of local forces, 14) civil defense units, 15) Assault Units of the Central Army Corps, 16) Units of the (?Republican Guard). Following his inspection of parade units, Rafi' is driven to the head of the parade and the national anthem is played.

At 0341 GMT, Rafi' begins his speech, discussing the achievements made during the years since the revolution, particularly over the past 15 months; the Geneva accords; and the Afghan Armed Forces. Rafi' expressed the forces' appreciation to President Najibullah, the PDPA, and the Council of Ministers for their attention to the Armed Forces, and notes the forces' participation in the recent elections and their readiness to defend the country. He expresses good wishes to the departing Soviet soldiers.

At 0349 GMT there was a brief loss of reception. At 0351 GMT an announcer is heard in progress, describing units of the parade as they pass the reviewing stand. The units pay their respects to President Najibullah as they pass.

At 0414 GMT, there is a flyover by military planes, while on the ground some military vehicles come into view. A number of helicopters then pass overhead.

The following units not mentioned in Defense Minister Rafi"s inspection are noted as passing the reviewing stand: 0416 GMT: a motorcycle unit carrying banners, followed by historic guns from the war of independence; 0419 GMT: units and companies of parachutists; 0421 GMT: People's Militia Operative Regiment No 1; 0426 GMT: tank units of an unnamed armored brigade; 0429 GMT: Rocket Forces.

At 0430 GMT, an announcer reports that the parade of military units has ended, and that a parade of civilian groups will begin.

At 0437 GMT, helicopters pass overhead and drop letters of congratulations, followed at 0439 by a group of pioneers carrying white flags and pigeons.

At 0422 GMT, groups of workers, "toilers," peasants, and various other representatives of Kabul's 10th ward pass to the accompaniment of music and poetry in Dari and Pashto, followed by units representing various other wards of the city of Kabul.

At 0529, groups of doctors and nurses from various hospitals and medical establishments in Kabul pass.

The parade of civilian groups ends at 0558 GMT and an announcer refers Kabul radio listeners and Kabul television viewers back to scheduled programming.

Rafi' Speech at Parade

LD261101 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 0341 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Speech by Brigadier General Muhammad Rafi', minister of national defense, at the military parade in Kabul marking the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution—live in Dari]

[Text] Dear compatriots, brave soldiers and officers, esteemed foreign guests: Today we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution. During the past year we have passed many tests and have travelled a decades-long path, [word indistinct] has been created, and great steps have been taken in the social sphere. The democratic state has been strengthened with a broad political system. All these achievements have broadly contributed over the years so that an effective, popular armed force was formed which is capable of independently defending the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of our homeland. The prestige of Afghanistan has risen in the international arena.

The national reconciliation policy, which provides full possibilities for implementing the constructive principles of the revolution, has been turned into a great gain of the April Revolution, in particular during the past 15 months since the national reconciliation policy was declared, the nationwide conference of the PDPA, and the historic Grand Assembly of the Afghan people have been held. The Constitution has been approved. The president of the country was elected and elections to the National Assembly have successfully concluded. More than 130,000 of our emigrant compatriots have returned to the homeland, and more than 40,000 persons of the armed opposition groups have joined their popular state.

The signing of the Geneva accords between Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which our people were impatiently awaiting for the sake of ensuring peace, counts as one of the great gains of the national reconciliation policy. [Word indistinct] the signing of the Geneva accords has taken a worthy place in the history of our country. [sentence indistinct]

Our people consider this great historical gain to be a result of the peaceful measures taken by the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. Noninterference in the two countries' internal affairs; respect for national sovereignty and political independence, non-arming, financing, or (?employing) mercenaries or sending them into the other side's territory; and the voluntary return of emigrants to Afghanistan have been guaranteed in accordance with the documents of these accords.

Allow me on this auspicious occasion, the great festival of Afghanistan's people, and on behalf of the personnel of the heroic Armed Forces of Afghanistan to tell the brothers and sisters present that the armed forces of the country will use all their resources to improve their living conditions and ensure their security.

The military men express their appreciation to Esteemed President Najibullah, the PDPA Central Committee, and the Council of Ministers for their constant attention to the armed forces and (?as a result) of their role in political life. They have become reliable defenders of the people's interests, power, and sovereignty in our country. The participation and active [word indistinct] of armed forces personnel in the elections to the National Assembly for the first time is a manifestation of this.

Our Armed Forces, in accordance with the Geneva accords, are preparing to independendly safguard our national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the independence of our country and the gains of the revolution. Our military doctorine has a defensive character. We will never carry out aggressive military operations against any country, unless we ourselves are subjected to armed aggression. In addition, we will constantly increase the readiness of our armed forces to foil aggression from abroad.

We do not conceal that the enemies of peace, [word indistinct], still have the idea in their heads to achieve their aims by [word indistinct] of weapons and continuing the fratricidal war and bloodshed. Pursuing this principle, we are making efforts to strengthen and increase our armed forces and to enhance their combat and political readiness for repelling the attacks of those who do not accept armed [word indistinct]. Our people are tired of war. They want peace. The [word indistinct] of the Armed Forces are (?working) for peace among the people with a great sense of responsibility.

Dear compatriots: The Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, in order to carry out [words indistinct] under conditions preparing to send off to their homeland the internationalist soldiers of the Soviet Union [word indistinct]. (?Allow me) on my own behalf and on behalf of the personnel of the armed forces to express good wishes to the internationalist Soviet soldiers who came to our assistance under difficult conditions. With firm steps, strong faith, inevitable victory, and steely determination, we will [word indistinct] united and strong, like soldiers and [word indistinct].

We are striving toward (?defending) the land of the Afghans and the gains of revolution, and toward future successes.

The Afghan Army is an army of peace and (?fraternity)!

How auspicious is the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution!

Long live the peace-loving Afghan people!

Comparison of Najibullah Speech on Elections

Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari at 1130 GMT on 22 April transmits a version of Najibullah's speech to the final session of the Central Election Commission for the Meli Shura at Delkosha Palace in Kabul on 21 April. The BAKHTAR version has been compared with the Kabul Domestic Dari version published in the 22 April Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT on pages 49-51 and adds the following:

Page 51, second paragraph, end of first sentence should read: ...about free elections. During election days, firing at the border forces increased by 1.5-2 times and the number of convoys and armed band groups dispatched over the borders increased by 50 percent.

During election days, rockets were fired on 10 provincial capitals and 11 district centers. More than 450 groups, totalling some 22,000 men, were working actively. As a result of firing and attacks, 127 persons were martyred and 193 were injured from among inhabitants and military personnel and 2 aircraft were shot down.

However, the efforts of the opposition were foiled as a result of the measures taken and normal proceedings and a successful conclusion to the elections were secured. The election of... (supplying additional passage)

Bangladesh

Ershad Outlines Government Policy Objectives

BK251523 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Bangladesh President Ershad said his government's foreign policy has not only helped protect the national interests, but has also achieved greater success in improving Bangladesh's friendly relations with other countries of the world.

He said Bangladesh's moderate, modest, and constructive position on bilateral, regional, and international issues has enhanced its prestige in the world and contributed to the proper projection of Bangladesh's national image. He was addressing the opening session of the fourth national parliament in Dhaka today.

President Ershad said as a Muslim country Bangladesh has all along given special emphasis on maintaining and preservation of peace, progress, and unity of the Muslim world.

Bangladesh has played a key role in the Iran-Iraq conflict, in seeking a just and lasting solution to the Afghan crisis, and in asserting the national rights of the Palestinian brothers.

He said Bangladesh wants withdrawal of the foreign troops from Cambodia so that people of that country can get an opportunity to determine their fate. Bangladesh also demands establishment of the inalienable rights of the Namibian people.

Bangladesh's pioneering role as an active member of the United Nations has drawn attention of all. As one of the leading countries of the Third World, Bangladesh has played its due part in different international forums including the Group of 77, and also Bangladesh's role as the spokesman of the least developed countries has been widely acclaimed.

Bangladesh's contribution to the preservation and improvement of the lives of children, population control, expansion of international trade, cooperation, and development has been profusely lauded by different countries of the world.

He also said Bangladesh has been decorated with the population award by the United Nations last June for her significant role in and contribution to population control at home and throughout the world.

Besides, Bangladesh's participation in the 10th annual session of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, held in January 1988, is worth mentioning. The president said visits to Bangladesh by different foreign dignitaries and his visits to different foreign countries bear testimony to the dynamism and success of our foreign policy.

He also said Bangladesh believes in the policy of establishing relations with neighbors on the basis of equality. In short, the main objective of the foreign policy of Bangladesh is to preserve national independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, and dignity.

In his speech, the president gave a brief resume of developmental reforms initiated and completed by his government in various sectors of national life during the last 6 years. The liquidation of poverty, rural development, reduction of unemployment, expansion of primary education, population control, increased food production, increased exports, honest and clean administration, and eradication of corruption are the main objectives of the government.

Mr Shamsul Huda Chowdhury and Mr M. Riazuddin Ahmed have been elected speaker and deputy speaker of the fourth parliament.

Speaks on Domestic Issues

BK251729 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpt] President Ershad has made a clarion call to all to forget the past differences and forge unity and understanding in the greater interest of independence, democracy, and economic emancipation of the people.

He was addressing the opening session of the fourth Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] in Dhaka today. The president said national consensus on fundamental issues is an essential precondition for achieving these cherished objectives.

It is necessary to have consensus at the leadership level for translating into reality the hopes and aspirations of the people who have given their unmistakable verdict in the last election.

Almighty God has given us the responsibility of building a better life for the people. Let us make joint efforts to give shape to the dreams of the martyrs of the war of independence.

The president spoke of the circumstance that led to the dissolution of the third parliament and formation of the present one. The fourth parliament, he said, marks the opening of the new phase in our national life.

Through the formation of this parliament the people have rejected the politics of terrorism and anarchy and held aloft the banner of democratic and constitutional process.

As an embodiment of people's unmistakable confidence, this Jatiya Sangsad has opened a new horizon of immense possibilities and set the country firmly on the road to democracy, peace, progress, and prosperity.

This fourth parliament is the result of the people's abiding faith in democracy and therein lies special significance of this parliament.

In his speech the president gave a brief resume of developments and reforms initiated and completed by his government in various sectors of national life during the last 6 years.

Giving a broad outline of his policy, he said the removal of poverty, rural development, reduction of unemployment, expansion of primary education, population control, increased food production, increased exports, honest and clean administration, and eradication of corruption are the main objectives of his government.

The president said what is necessary at first in national development is an organized and efficient communication network. The completion of the multipurpose Jamuna bridge project is government's number one target in this sector.

The construction work of the Buri Ganga and Meghna bridges is progressing fast. The Hardings bridge is being renovated to start road communication side by side with railway traffic.

A bridge over the Brahmaputra will also be constructed. The president said the country and the people will immensely benefit from these bridges.

About the increasing number of landless people the president said this was threatening social equilibrium. To tide over the situation the government has introduced land reforms.

Under the land reforms, landless people are being gradually rehabilitated. Eight lakh acres of [word indistinct] land has been earmarked for rehabilitation of the landless.

Thirty-four thousand acres of land have already been distributed among over 2,300 families. With the distribution of land still going on more lands were being recovered for the landless people.

The president said a large section population of the country has become homeless for various socioeconomic reasons. The government has taken up a new scheme to provide homes for these floating people.

Under the scheme, five cluster villages will be set up in each upazilla [subdistrict] during next 4 years. A similar scheme has been taken up for the urban areas.

The Dhaka municipal corporation has started constructing 700 [word indistinct] boardings for the poor. The president expressed the hope that the other municipalities will take similar steps.

The president laid stress on the educational sector and said the future of the nation depends on its education system, hence the government has given top most priority to this sector. The government's declared policy is to ensure education for all by the year 2000.

The president said food shortage is the great impediment in the way of the country's economic development. The country, which was once a granary, is now dependent on others for food.

It is the government's firm resolve to reverse the situation. As a step toward that the target of food production has been fixed at 2 crore tons to attain self-sufficiency in food by 1990.

In the meantime, the country's food production has been raised to 1 crore 64 lakh tons and for the first time a national food policy has been framed. Except food, the import of other goods has also been slashed down.

The president said it is expected the overall growth rate for the next year will be fixed at 6.1 percent as against 2.6 percent during the current year.

In the industrial sector the growth rate next year is expected to be 7.1 percent as against 5.2 percent during the current year with the utilization of the increased capacity.

President Ershad expressed satisfaction that due to untiring efforts in the last 6 years necessary infrastructure for development has been laid and despite the most devastating floods of the current century, food production has increased. Production of power has also gone up.

Organized communication system has spread throughout the country. Export earning has increased and with it has gone up the national prestige. [passage omitted]

Shanti Bahini Tribals Kill 7 in Muslim Village

BK251024 Hong Kong AFP in English 1015 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Chittagong, Bangladesh, April 25 (AFP)—Shanti Bahini tribal insurgents have raided a Moslem settler village in the Khagrachari Hill District killing seven people and injuring 12, local police sources said Monday.

A district police official told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that about 50 rebels raided Comilla Tila village late Sunday, shooting villagers as they slept and burning at least 10 houses. Seven people died immediately, he said.

Local security forces rushed to the scene and forced the rebels, fighting a 14-year-old bush war for tribal autonomy, to retreat after a short exchange of fire, the official said. Some arms and ammunitions left by the fleeing rebels were recovered.

India

Meeting of AICC-I Group Continues in Kamrajnagar

More on Gandhi Address

BK231514 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has said Pakistan's meddling in Punjab is not in the interest of that country. It is not also in the interest of the people of Pakistan who want to have good relations with our people.

Mr Gandhi in his inaugural address to the AICC-I [All India Congress Committee] meet at Kamrajnagar near Madras today said our efforts to bring peace to Punjab are being hamphered by Pakistan's blatant and direct help to terrorists.

Reiterating his government's commitment to developing friendly relations with Pakistan, Mr Gandhi said we have offered Pakistan our hand of friendship on a number of occasions and made several proposals which we believe will take the process of building friendly ties further.

Mr Gandhi expressed the hope Pakistan will respond and cease meddling in India's internal affairs. He also hopes that Pakistan will abandon its nuclear pretentions and end its hostile postures in Siachen. This is the only road to a genuine and sincere normalization of relations, Mr Gandhi emphasized.

Speaking about the situation in Punjab, Mr Gandhi said we have taken several initiatives to demonstrate our sincerity. We made it clear that we will give no quarter to the killers.

Complimenting the peacekeeping force for its commendable job under adverse conditions in Sri Lanka, Mr Gandhi said we are always ready for talks with the LTTE provided they lay down arms and accept the India-Sri Lanka agreement.

Referring to China, Mr Gandhi said the border question is a difficult and complex one and any settlement must take fully into account the history of the dispute and the concern and sentiments of both sides.

During his 45-minute speech, Mr Gandhi referred to the political scenario in the country and listed the achievements of various sectors of the economy during the last few years.

He said the eighth [5-year development] plan will be based on agro-climatic zones. Mr Gandhi announced that eradication of poverty is essential to his party's ideology and said it will have the top-most priority.

Party Secretary Briefs Newsmen

BK221652 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Excerpt] The Congress-I working committee, now meeting at Kamarajnagar near Madras has recommended to the AICC-I to impart a sharper edge to the socialistic policies of the party.

The recommendation was incorporated in the draft political resolution discussed at length in the working committee meeting.

Briefing newsmen on the deliberations, the party's general secretary, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, said the AICC-I session will reaffirm its faith in the time-tested foreign policy.

It also calls upon all peace-loving and democratic forces to join hands in defeating the growing menace of communalism, fundamentalism, and separatism. The draft resolution recalls that the country has been facing challenges during the last few years and there has been heartening response from the people in facing these challenges.

It says the reactionary and destabilizing forces are joining hands with fundamentalist elements on a more vicious pattern. The resolution adds that the Congress and its leaders have borne the brunt of unfounded and unprincipled attacks.

These forces lack positive contents and have always tried to make it up by unfounded personal vilification and slander against Mr Rajiv Gandhi. The resolution charged that most political parties in the country today present a picture of a total lack of grasp of the basic issues.

They are in utter ideological confusion and are trying to forge an opportunistic and unprincipled political alliance to grab political power somehow.

The working committee meeting which commenced this evening will finalize the agenda for the AICC-I session beginning tomorrow.

In an informal chat with newsmen during a recess, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said any Indian found guilty in the Bofors deal will be punished.

About the LTTE in Sri Lanka, Mr Gandhi said India has already made it clear to them that they should lay down arms, accept the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, and join the normal political process.

He said PKF is in Sri Lanka only to restore normalcy and would not stay a day longer than required. [passage omitted]

Gandhi's Concluding Address

BK250335 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Mr Rajiv Gandhi has said the Planning Commission has been directed to go to the rural areas and involve the people at the grass-roots level. In his concluding remarks at the 2-day AICC-I session at Kamrajnagar near Madras yesterday evening, he said the eighth plan will be a much more dynamic one, involving district and village-level bodies.

The party president pledged that his government will do everything possible to eradicate poverty and unemployment and take the country to its rightful place in the world.

He said the Congress will preserve the secular fabric of the country and establish a socialist-pattern society as pledged at the Avadi session 32 years ago.

Mr Gandhi decried the populist programs initiated by some state governments. These programs, he said, have only benefited the ruling parties in both states, while the overall development of the states themselves and the country as a whole suffered very much.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi stressed the need for devolution of powers up to the panchayat [village council] level to effectively implement programs. He said only when the decisionmaking process is taken to the lower levels in the rural areas can we help the weaker sections, like the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women, and minorities, who form the vast majority of the country's population. [passage omitted]

Pant Warns Pakistan on Nuclear Issue

BK251246 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The defense minister, Mr Pant, has assured the Lok Sabha that India's response will be decisive and adequate to Pakistan's feverish efforts at acquiring nuclear capability.

Replying to the debate on the budgetary demands of his ministry, Mr Pant said Pakistan's clandestine efforts are continuing toward building nuclear weapons. But, he said, this will not put us to any disadvantage.

He said India has been doing its best to improve relations with Pakistan. However, these efforts cannot succeed unless Islamabad stops helping the terrorists in Punjab.

Referring to the situation in India's neighborhood, Mr Pant said arms and equipment are being piled up in the area on an unprecedented scale. There is a likelihood that these can get into wrong hands.

Justifies Defense Expenditures

BK251649 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The defense minister, Mr Pant, has assured the Lok Sabha that India's response will be decisive and adequate to Pakistan's feverish efforts at acquiring nuclear capability.

Replying to the debate on the budgetary demands of his ministry, Mr Pant said Pakistan's clandestine efforts are continuing toward building nuclear weapons. But, he said, this will not put us to any disadvantage. [passage omitted]

Mr Pant said we cannot let our guards down. We cannot have any window of vulnerability open to aggression by anyone. The minister did not agree with some members' contention that the defense expenditure was on the high side.

He said our defense spending is modest in comparison with others in the region. He said we have long borders and a large population to defend. Under the situation it is important that we maintain minimum defense preparedness.

Stressing the importance of modernization of Armed Forces, Mr Pant said our goal is not self-sufficiency, but maximum self-reliance. India will continue to import whatever is necessary, he asserted.

In this context the defense minister referred to the on-going program to develop a light combat aircraft [with U.S. cooperation], the main battle tank, and the missiles project.

He said the light combat aircraft will be essentially Indian in design and concept, though the engine is being imported. He said the country has achieved the latest technology in some areas like radar system and torpedoes.

The minister said we are determined to push through the project. He said further tests, particularly in respect of mobility are underway, for the main battle tank Arjun which was displayed during the Republic Day.

He disclosed that the country has achieved the state of (?high) technology in some crucial areas like the radar system Indira which is going into production shortly.

A most modern factory is being set up for ammunition with the technology by the defense research and development organization. Rejecting the criticism that there was no defense planning in the country, Mr Pant said India has acquired vast experience in the field. There is no rigidity since perspective plans are needed to meet long-, medium-, and short-term requirements.

In his 1-hour reply, the defense minister also spoke on the role of the IPKF in Sri Lanka and the collaboration with the Soviet Union and the United States in the defense field.

He said the IPKF had to begin operations under the Sri Lanka agreement as uncontrolled violence broke out. He said the LTTE is welcomed to join the democratic process if it surrenders its arms.

On India-Soviet ties, the minister said these have grown over the years and have stood the test of time. He made it clear that the import of technology from the United States will not be at the expense of any of our existing relations, nor at the cost of the indigenous efforts.

Intervening in the debate, the home minister charged [former Defense Minister] V.P. Singh with fabricating the account of an informal meeting of the cabinet committee on political affairs held on the 10th of April last year to malign the prime minister.

Mr Buta Singh referred to a public statement issued by Mr V.P. Singh earlier on the subject and said the prime minister did not comment on the conduct of the [West] German firm HTW [Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft] or its alleged agent at the meeting.

The prime minister also did not suggest that the subject matter should be leaked to the press. The home minister made it clear that he was speaking with full sense of responsibility and without any fear of contradiction as he was present at the meeting.

He said the entire discussion at the meeting was about the meaning of collective responsibility since Mr V. P. Singh as defense minister had taken an important decision of ordering an inquiry [into the deal to purchase submarines from HTW].

He [V.P. Singh] was questioned as to why he had not taken his cabinet colleagues into confidence. The home minister said Mr V.P. Singh was hard put to defend himself and tried to belittle the importance of the inquiry.

He characterized Mr V.P. Singh's statement as mischievous and said this is not the first time when memory played tricks on him. His selective lapse of memory is not accidental but politically motivated.

The home minister's intervention was in response to a clarification sought by Mr Indrajit Gupta, CPI, who referred to Mr V.P. Singh's statement in a section of the press; this was marked by a procedural wrangle.

The opposition members insisted that the home minister could not make a statement or intervene while the house was discussing the defense budget. Some of them also wanted to seek more clarifications. The chair overruled their objection.

Earlier, the minister of state for defense, Mr Santosh Mohan Dev, strongly defended the role of the Army engaged in anti-insurgency measures in the northeast. During discussions, members expressed concern over the deteriorating security environment in the region.

They said the government should revise its nuclear options because of the grave danger posed by China and Pakistan.

Pakistan Involvement in Punjab 'Established'

BK260754 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, announced in the Rajya Sabha today that government is willing to talk to anyone on a political solution to the Punjab problem provided three parameters are kept in mind.

Replying to a supplementary, he said the parameters are that separatism will not be tolerated, religious places will not be allowed to be used for political purposes, and killings of innocent people should be stopped.

The home minister clarified that any political solution of the isswe will be within the framework of the Constitution.

The minister of state for home, Mr P. Chidambaram, told the House that involvement of Pakistan in aiding terrorists has been established. He said 13 intruders were killed on the Indo-Pak border during the last fortnight.

Mr Chidambaram asserted that the escalation in killings was due to inflow of terrorists and weapons from across the border. He said the work on sealing the Indo-Pak border has already started.

Mr Chidambaram informed the house that while reviewing the situation with the central and state officers, the political aspect of the problem was also kept in mind.

More on Pakistan Connection

BK260950 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The home minister has announced that the government is willing to talk to anyone on a political solution to the Punjab problem, provided three parameters are observed.

The parameters are that separatism will not be tolerated, religious places will not be allowed to be used for political purposes, and killing of innocent people should be stopped.

Replying to a supplementary in the Rajya Sabha today, Mr Buta Singh clarified that any political solution of the issue will be within the framework of the Constitution.

The minister of state for home told the house that involvement of Pakistan in aiding terrorists has been established. Smuggling of arms escalated in the last 3 months, which resulted in more killings in the state.

Mr Chidambaram asserted that the escalation in killings was due to inflow of terrorists and weapons from across the border. He said an action plan has been drawn up to check terrorism in Punjab.

Replying to another question, Mr Chidambaram said the issue of Pakistan's persistent encouragement to the terrorist activities in Punjab has been raised with that country on several occasions at various levels.

He said the Pakistan Government has been denying the allegations. The Ministry of External Affairs presented another aide-memoire to the Pakistan Government in this regard on the 15th of this month.

'Stringent Punishment' for Drug Offenders

BK260334 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The cabinet subcommittee on anti-drug measures has suggested ways to curb illicit drug trafficking. The subcommittee, which was set up under the chairmanship of the home minister, Mr Buta Singh, earlier this month has recommended stringent punishment to the offenders by amending the Narcotics Drug Act.

It said exclusive courts should be set up in the states to deal with the drug-related offenses and intelligence network should be strengthened. The subcommittee also suggested that the property acquired from the funds generated through drug-related crimes be forfeited. According to official sources, these funds were used for financing terrorist activities and insurgent groups.

Police Seize Heroin, Arms in New Delhi

BK221604 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] Delhi police today seized 17 kg of high quality heroin valued at 17 crore rupees in the international market. Six persons have been arrested, three of whom were involved with a drug trafficker having terrorist links.

The police also recovered a number of arms and ammunition from some houses in a West Delhi colony. This follows the arrest of two terrorists—Paramjit Singh alias Panna, and Awtar Singh alias Bittu.

Home Minister Accuses Former President

BK251206 Hong Kong AFP in English 1123 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] New Delhi, April 25 (AFP)—India's home minister, Buta Singh, has accused former President Zail Singh of harboring criminals and hatching plots to topple the government while in office, newspapers said Monday.

Mr Buta Singh launched a virulent attack on the country's most controversial president Sunday while addressing the ruling Congress (I) Party's annual meeting in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

The powerful home minister accused the ex-president, 72, of sheltering people prosecuted for unspecified offences and of hiring a retired journalist to draft documents seeking the dismissal of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

The sprawling presidential palace had become the "most dangerous security risk for the rest of the country," the daily HINDU quoted Mr Buta Singh as saying.

Mr Zail Singh, who retired from India's highest office in a blaze of controversy last summer, has called the 44-year-old premier a liar and said Mr Gandhi was keeping him in the dark about matters of state.

The PATRIOT daily quoted Palaniappan Chidambaram, minister of state for home affairs, as saying: "Mr Rajiv Gandhi is the prime minister. He is not principal information officer to the president."

Mr Zail Singh recently told a weekly magazine that some disenchanted colleagues of Mr Gandhi had offered him 23 million to 30 million dollars to contest the presidential election for a second term.

The allegation sparked a fresh political row, as Mr Zail Singh refused to disclose the identities of the prospective donors and Mr Gandhi promised to order an official investigation into the charge.

The Supreme Court had ordered an investigation to find out if smugglers and people wanted for violating India's tough currency laws were also given shelter by Mr Zail Singh in his official home, Mr Buta Singh said.

"Unheard of things happened in the Rashtrapati Bhavan (Presidential Palace) and the people have a right to know," Mr Buta Singh said.

A conspiracy was hatched against the prime minister and Mr Zail Singh, who was president at the time, was a "willing partner" to it, the PATRIOT quoted the home minister as saying.

The Congress (I) meeting in southern Kamrajnagar passed a resolution that the "conspiracy" against Mr Gandhi's administration did not succeed because of patriotism and discipline in the rank and file of the Congress (I) Party.

Iran

Khamene'i on Mobilization, U.S. 'Threats'

NC260756 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1700 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Interview with President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i by unidentified station correspondent on 25 April following the meeting of the Supreme War Support Council; place not given—recorded]

[Khamene'i] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. As you know, the Supreme War Support Council was convened for the purpose of providing facilities for supporting the war effort from every aspect. From time to time, government departments face certain difficulties in providing support. These meetings solve those problems. At times, certain measures are also taken in order to provide full support for the battlefronts and the dear fighters. Today, a major part of our meeting was devoted to these issues and some obstacles were removed. The major issue discussed was that of mobilizing forces along with a phased plan for the dispatch of forces, which the IRGC had previously announced and which is being implemented on the basis of that program. A report was presented which showed that, thanks be to God, people have shown great enthusiasm for going to the fronts and for joining the convoys that have been announced. These days are the days for the dispatch of the Lord of Martyrs, [Imam Husayn], and they have been very good, according to the reports submitted to us, particularly after the statement the Supreme War Support Council issued 5 or 6 days ago. The brothers in charge of the matter were at the session and submitted the statistics regarding the forces dispatched.

However, the main issue stressed was that the trend of the dispatch of forces should not be stopped under any circumstances, and should not even slacken. As we have previously informed our dear nation, there should always be forces ready at the battlefronts at the disposal of the commanders and those who are responsible for the conduct of the war. This will provide them with the opportunity to begin their offensives and attacks whenever and wherever they decide. At the moment, the movement of the people toward the battlefronts is very good. However, this movement should continue with the greatest possible force, and those whose turn has been decided in advance should go at the appointed time, or even earlier.

Of course, the IRGC will announce when it can assimilate the volunteers. At the moment, I think that in some provinces we cannot take any more volunateers because the number of those who have been sent has been so large. Of course, I will not name those provinces so that the responsible brothers can organize their work in those provinces in the way they see fit. However, there are some provinces where forces have been dispatched in excess of those provinces' capability to assimilate them. These forces have gone to other units, to those units who

need forces. This plan should continue. The people should always feel that the strength of the battlefronts and the powerful presence of the Islamic Republic on the international military and political scene and in the region, which is subjected to a great many psychological threats by the superpowers, is dependent upon the constant presence of the people in vital areas, above all at the battlefronts of the imposed war. The young people, particularly those who have received training and are ready, should go to the battlefronts earlier. Others, too, should continue their dispatch to the war in the usual manner, or in an accelerated form. These were some of the issues discussed today.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr President, U.S. President Reagan yesterday stated in an interview that if any ship is attacked in the Persian Gulf the Iranian nation and government will pay a high price. As chairman of the Supreme Defense Council, how do you assess this statement?

[Khamene'i] What Reagan has said is bullying and nonsensical talk. Lately, the U.S. ruling circles have repeatedly made such threats, although it is most certainly not in their interest to do so, because in either case, whether or not those threats are carried out, they would entail great losses for them. The Iranian nation will strongly defend itself, and will harshly respond to any aggressive act by anybody, including the United States. We are confident, and proper calculations demonstrate this, that the U.S. regime is highly vulnerable in all parts of the world. It is also quite vulnerable in this region, and it would certainly be against their interests.

However, there is also an internal aspect to these threats because of the upcoming election. Reagan and the Republican Party have always won people's votes through gestures of strength, of power. In the past 2 or 3 years Reagan has been found to be vulnerable over many issues. In political issues such as the McFarlane fiasco, in various failures on the world scenes, in the issue of the collapse of foreign exchange and the decline in the value of stocks, and in many other economic, political, and military matters, these gentlemen have experienced many defeats in the past few years. In the last days of his rule, he wishes to engage in a show of strength, hoping to leave a powerful image of himself in the minds of the Americans so that he might be regarded as a powerful President in the future, and also by trying to win some respect for the Republicans who are facing elections. However, in a serious and decisive manner, I announce that any aggressive move by the United States in the Persian Gulf will meet with a decisive and harsh response by us.

[Correspondent] Reports indicate that Iraq intends to hold what it calls a peace conference, inviting outstanding personalities and dignitaries. I want to ask Your Excellency about Iraq's objective in this, and, generally speaking, what steps can be taken about it?

[Khamene'i] I do not know who has been invited to this conference you refer to or whether these personalities include truly peace-loving and genuine people or not. However, if there truly are such people among the guests, their first question should be addressed to their host: Saddam Husayn's regime. They should ask: If you are such fervent supporters of peace, why did you fire up the region, and why do you continue to do so? Why did you start the war? Why did you threaten a popular, genuine, and newly-born revolution with your military operation? Of course, this is another offense. They should ask: Why did you refuse to retreat when several thousand kilometers of Iranian territory were under your boots and when we said you should retreat so that we could talk? Why, by refusing this just request, did you prolong the war until we had to force you to retreat, through military pressure? Of course, some of our territory in some parts of the border remains under their occupation, including the city of Naft-e Shah. If the Iraqi regime is honest and truly interested in peace, the first thing it should say is: I will retreat from this area I occupied 7 and 1/2 to 8 years ago. It has not done so, nor will ever do this. The Iraqi regime's nature is aggressive. They should also tell the Iraqi regime: If you are so interested in peace and humanity, explain the ugly and criminal acts that you have committed during the war. What is the meaning of using chemical weapons against the residents of cities? What is the meaning of beginning and continuing the war of cities? If these people are truly genuine and support peace, if they are not lying, they should ask these questions. Sometimes people say certain things and label certain people as personalities. If these are the types of people who will attend, then we have nothing to tell them. However, if they are truly genuine people, they should search their consciences and realize they have accepted an invitation from executioners and crafty, fire-kindling liars in the name of peace. These guests should be brave and ask the Iraqi regime the questions I have asked, as well as many other questions. They should spend some time watching a film of the Halabjah incident. I do not think this film is more than 30 minutes long. I propose that those guests—if there really are any guests—watch this film and see what the Iraqi regime did.

Saddam is creating too many problems. He and the present Iraqi regime will definitely go. The nature of this regime is such that it cannot stay, in view of the situation it is now facing. What the Americans and others are doing will have no effect, either. The Iraqi regime may sometimes create a fuss here and there, but this is not a proof of life or the potential to continue living. This is definite. The Iraqi regime is rotten from within; they cannot regain respect through such assistance and whitewashings. You can see in recent incidents the vast propaganda favoring Iraq under America's aegis in a bid to hide its political disgrace and great weakness. However, they will be unable to conceal this, and their efforts will be in vain.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much.

[Khamene'i] Thank you. [end recording]

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Interviewed on Toxins, War

LD252243 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Report on an interview with Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani by a LA STAMPA correspondent and a correspondent from Italy's Second Television Network; date, place not given]

The imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council, in response to a question concerning the effects of the continuation of the war on Iran's relations with Arabs, and the correspondent's claim of Arab's mistrust of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said: We think that after the war ends we will be closer to the Arabs, as we are at the moment with some of them, because we have no desire for Arab land. Moreover, we can provide support for them with their problems. They will then be satisfied, and will realize that Saddam has been a thorn in their side, and that with his departure the way to unity will be open to them. Our slogan is freedom and independence for countries so that they are not under the control of colonialist powers. We are prepared to help our neighbors in this respect.

He added: The fact that we want Islamic philosophy ruling in Islamic countries is because we sincerely believe that Muslims' salvation will be through the establishment of Islamic rule. However, we do not wish to establish this by force.

Discussing Iran's role in the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner issue, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Naturally we are against such actions. The only thing we did was to secure the freedom of a number of passengers. We basically believe that the aircraft was hijacked in order to overshadow any publicity against Iraq over the Halabjah issue.

Answering a question regarding his views on the Palestinian issue and 'Arafat's position, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: We accept the struggle of the people of Palestine. We support anyone struggling in Palestine to liberate his country. The collusive positions that currently exist, and the false belief that negotiations can obtain Palestinian rights are not accepted by us. We do not accept anyone taking steps in this direction. This is our view and we are actively supporting the Palestinian strugglers.

The spokesman for the Supreme Defense Council discussed the possibility of mass production of chemical weapons in Iran and their use for retaliation: We are capable of mass production. However, we do not wish to fill our stores with materials we hope never to use. As yet we have not felt the need for mass production, but we are quite able to produce whatever quantities of such dangerous materials we need in a brief period of time.

An Italian correspondent asked: Should the Iraqis expand the level of their crimes and commit further massacres such as Halabjah and should this danger be permanent, considering my understanding of Islam and my belief that in Shi'ism there is forgiveness, can Saddam Husayn be forgiven after 8 years? Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in response, said: As far as forgiveness is concerned, if we felt that we had such a right or if such an act would have been in our interest, we would have done so. However, we believe that nothing is more beneficial than the establishment of justice for our nations and our region. We believe that should this war end and Saddam be forgiven, then the region will not see real peace. We believe that should we obtain justice and the aggressor be punished, Iran, Iraq, and the entire region will reach lasting peace, as happened in Europe. Had the Nazis remained in power after the Second World War, what would have happened? Would we not still be engaged in such a war? Hitler's eradication saved Europe and the world. Let this happen in the region. We see ourself as capable of identifying and punishing the aggressor if the superpowers are unwilling to do this. However, we would rather do this with the minimum number of losses.

In the interview, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani asked a correspondent: As great powers know that Saddam started the war and has violated all international conventions, are they prepared to declare this regime the aggressor in order to resolve the issue of the war? The Italian correspondent said: The two superpowers will never agree to officially identify Saddam Husayn as the aggressor. This is because the game of politics and war is for big stakes. As a correspondent, in my view this is a good way to end the war. Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Are you not sad that the wheels of power in the world are in the hands of such unjust people? The Italian correspondent responded: I am a correspondent and am not qualified to make such a judgement. However, I should say that my history is full of such injustice.

In answer to a question about whether Iran is prepared to pursue peace through indirect discussions carried out with the help of friendly countries such as Italy, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: If we really see our interest in this, then we would accept such a policy. However, this may be very expensive for us, the region, and even the people of Iraq. We have raised a specific point in the Security Council, stating that if they all agree that Baghdad is the aggressor, then they should declare the Baghdad regime as the aggressor. Iran would then accept a cease-fire until such time as a responsible committee decides on the punishment for the aggressor. If this war ends through (?negotiations) we will see more blood spilled. The remaining discontent will have much more dangerous effect. If ever the Ba'th Party again felt strong, it would resume this war. This is a condition that currently exists between Arabs and Israel.

In conclusion, referring to the resolution to the Afghanistan issue, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed: In our view the people of Afghanistan should determine their own

destiny: Because the people of Afghanistan did not participate in the signing of the Geneva agreement, we are opposed to it.

Majlis Speaker Meets With Envoy to Ankara

LD251734 Tehran IRNA in English 1723 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said Monday that despite "Washington's Satanic acts", Iran will continue fighting the Iraqi regime to achieve its legitimate rights.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani made the remarks in a meeting with home-coming ambassador to Turkey Manuchehr Motaki.

At the meeting, the Iranian envoy presented a report to the speaker on the latest developments in Tehran-Ankara relations.

Commentary Marks 1980 Tabas Desert Events

LD251812 Tehran International Service in Persian 1545 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Each year, 25 April is a reminder to Islamic Iran of the historical defeat of the United States in the Tabas desert, and the disarming of the Western arrogance by the Islamic Revolution of Iran. On 25 April 1980, U.S. commandos, using transport planes and advanced helicopters, piratically landed on the Tabas desert. They planned to carry out a plot to topple the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The planners of the operation had meticulously calculated everything, and had time and again reexamined and reviewed their calculations. The maneuverability of the units engaged in the operations were tested under different circumstances. In connection with this mission, special U.S. commandos had spent more than 5 months receiving complex training in the deserts of Arizona under conditions similar to those in Iran. In fact, everything was progressing well for the United States on the proposed plans. On the basis of remarks by officials from the Pentagon, an unlimited budget had been set aside for these operations.

Aircraft and their communications and radar equipment had been repeatedly subjected to thorough and exacting tests. Additionally, the U.S. meteorological organization had studied Iran's climatic conditions, particularly in the Tabas region where the U.S. aircraft and helicopters were to land. The pilots of those aircraft had also been chosen from among the most elite U.S. war criminals and had received many decorations in the course of the Vietnam war. According to the estimation of the planners of those operations, the chances of success was said to be more than 90 percent. U.S. naval fleets in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and all U.S. bases in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region, as well as all U.S. embassies were placed on full alert in order to ensure the success of the plot.

However, despite all the calculations and evaluations, the U.S. plot for a military invasion through Tabas was turned into a humiliating defeat in the first moments of its implementation. The collision of a U.S. helicopter with a C-130 aircraft prevented Washington's war machine from achieving its aim. Jimmy Carter, the U.S. President at that time, in indescribable haste, issued the order to abort the mission, and for the remnants of the U.S. elite forces to return. In justifying this military defeat, he said that he had studied all the options for solving that problem [as heard], even to dropping an atomic bomb on Tehran.

The humiliating defeat of U.S. forces in the Tabas desert conveyed an important point to the Muslim Iranian people, namely, that White House officials could not tolerate that great blow [as heard] to their prestige, and that the Tabas military attack would not be the last U.S. military invasion. On the contrary, it was the start of a long face-to-face confrontation and clash against the Islamic Republic. In fact, for nearly a decade the Pentagon has been trying to erase the memory of that defeat in Tabas by planning and implementing effective operations. A quick glance at the events which have taken place since the start of the Islamic Revolution proves the inability of U.S. imperialism to confront the Islamic Revolution.

The military attack against Iran's oil platforms in the Persian Gulf on the eve of the anniversary of the Tabas incident is one of the latest U.S. efforts to intimidate the Islamic Revolution. However, was the heroic defense by the Iranian fighters against the unequal and piratical invasion of U.S. forces not a repeated assertion of the ineffectiveness of U.S. military power in the face of the glorious Islamic Revolution of Iran?

Envoy in London Protests UK Position

LD252013 Tehran IRNA in English 2005 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] London, April 25, IRNA—Iran has strongly protested to Britain over its expression of support for last week's American attack on Iranian oil installations in the Persian Gulf.

The protest was expressed by the Iranian Charge d'affaires Mohammad Mehdi Akhundzadeh in a meeting with head of the Middle East section at the Foreign Ministry Rob Young Monday.

The British official was specifically asked to convey Iran's remonstration about statements made by Prime Minister Thatcher, Foreign Secretary Howe and Junior Minister Mellor backing the raids.

The statements, particularly from Mellor, were "irresponsible," the Iranian official said, and that Britain was "trying to justify America's attacks." They would however "not have any effect on Iran's principled policy in the war or in the Persian Gulf."

A Foreign Office spokesman acknowledged that the meeting was made at Akhundzadeh's request, but did not give details of the discussion.

The spokesman said however that he would not have been surprised at the protest as Britain had already received one through the Swedish Embassy in Tehran which looks after British interests.

Envoy in Rome Criticizes U.S. 'Attack'

LD231903 Tehran IRNA in English 1838 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Rome, April 22, IRNA—Iranian ambassador to Italy, Hamid Abutaledi considered the Italian Government's stance towards Persian Gulf developments as positive and emphasized that the recent U.S. aggression against Iran will be given a severe answer.

In a press conference here Friday, Abutaledi branded the U.S. as violating the fifth article of U.N. resolution 598 and said that Washington resorts to various mischiefs to worsen regional situation and militarily drag its Western allies to the Persian Gulf. As examples, he cited the mining of the waterway and attacks on cargo ships and oil installations of other countries.

Article 5 of Resolution 598 calls upon all states to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any act which may lead to further escalation and widening of the conflict, which may hamper the implementation of the present resolution, he noted.

Abutaledi described the U.S. attack on Iranian oil platforms and in the Al-Faw region which took place in direct coordination with Kuwait and the Iraqi regime, as a declaration of war against Iran, and assured that the Islamic Republic will not leave it unanswered.

He stressed that Iran reserves the right of retaliation at any place or time of its choosing because when a U.S. frigate hit a mine probably sowed by the Iraqi Ba'thist regime, Washington brutally attacked Iran without a warning.

The Iranian ambassador termed the present situation in the Persian Gulf as explosive and said the main objective of the U.S. is to stop European governments from pulling out their fleets from the region.

Abutaledi said that the withdrawal of naval fleets from the region should be the first step taken by European countries to show their disassociation from U.S. threats and mischiefs.

He said that the Italian foreign minister, Guilio Andreotti, has adopted appropriate measures at the U.N. concerning the Iraqi-imposed war and like his West German colleague, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, has named the Iraqi regime as the aggressor.

As a result of this policy, Abutaledi said, the Islamic Republic of Iran announced readiness to talk with the members of the Security Council when it was headed by the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy.

The Iranian ambassador denied that Iran had any hand in the recent hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner and described it as a blatant lie.

Defense Minister Attends Ceremony for Navy Martyrs

LD252319 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] In order to honor the memory of the brave men of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran who were martyred in their battle with the aggressor U.S. militarists in the Persian Gulf, special ceremonies were held in the Martyr Motahhari school this morning and were attended by the defense minister, the commander of the Navy, Brigadier General Zahirnezhad, the imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council, and Gendarmerie and police commanders.

During the ceremonies, the commanders and a large number of the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran chanted crushing slogans and praised the bravery of the personnel of the destroyer "Sahand" and the frigate "Joshan" and announced their readiness to fight the enemies of Islam.

Supreme Judicial Council Discusses Police

LD260173 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] In today's session of the Supreme Judicial Council, Mr Musavi-Ardabili, in a speech markaing the occasion of Judicial Police Day, stressed the need to expand the judicial police and form its branches in areas where it does not exist. He praised the efforts and activities of the organization. It was suggested that, as the judicial police organization's members are faithful and capable people and because it was formed after the revolution, the organization should be considered among the revolutionary organizations. This matter was sent on to the cabinet as a decision by the Supreme Judicial Council.

Armenian Rally To Commemorate 1915 Massacre

LD232047 Tehran IRNA in English 1831 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—Tehran's Armenian Christian community held special ceremonies on the occasion of the 73d anniversary of massacre of Armenians said to done by Ottoman Turkey (on April 24, 1915).

A group of Armenians went on a 24 hour hunger strike (from noon today) in front of the United Nations office in Tehran.

In a statement released at the start of the hunger strike, the Armenians announced the reasons, as to voice support for other oppressed peoples around the world and to condemn global arrogance's aggressions and oppressions.

In another statement, they denounced Iraqi attacks on Iran's civilian areas and deployment of chemical weapons by the Ba'thist regime on Halabjah.

Call for Justice, Rights

LD242004 Tehran IRNA in English 1505 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA—A large group of Iranian Armenians staged rallies in Tehran Monday [as received] commemorating the massacre of over a million Armenians on April 24, 1915, said to be done by Ottoman Turkey.

The marchers, parading through different streets, gathered at Saint Mary Church in the capital to join another group of Armenians who had earlier staged a 24-hour hunger strike in front of the U.N. office here. A resolution read at the end of the three-hour rally called on international circles to denounce the reported carnage of over 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman Turkey in 1915 and to take measures to administer justice concerning Armenians' rights.

Elsewhere, the resolution condemned the Iraqi Ba'thist regime for its missile and air attacks on Iran's cities and for its chemical bombardment of the Iranian liberated town of Halabjah. The resolution also lauded the Iranian nation for its heroic resistance in the Iraqi-imposed war.

Similar ceremonies were held in several cities all over the country.

Pilot, Passenger Deny Rumors of More Hijackers

LD231828 Tehran IRNA in English 1816 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 23, IRNA—The pilot of the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner who was among the last remaining hostages freed in Algeria last Thursday refuted reports which alledged more hijackers had boarded the airliner when it was force-landed at Mashhad airport, northeastern Iran. "No one joined the hijackers when the airplane was at Mashhad airport," he stressed.

The Kuwaiti airliner's pilot Sobhi Yousef [name as received], an Iraqi national, said, "The hijackers treated the crew politely and harmed none of us."

An identical statement was given by the two ladies of the Kuwaiti family who were among the hostages. They acknowledged that the Iranian physician who entered the plane at Mashhad airport treated them very kindly.

"The Iranian physician tried to get my (ailing) sister off the aircraft but the hijackers did not accept," said Ebtesam Khalid Al Sabah [name as received].

Meanwhile the Kuwaiti press by publishing false statements and attributing them to some passengers continued to accuse Iran of collusion and association with the hijackers.

Even though the passengers were freed two days ago, Kuwaiti newspapers today allocated their front pages, titles, and editorials to the hijacking drama and cooked-up a new story, alleging that the hijackers were trained at an Iranian Air-Force base. The daily AL-WATAN went to the limits of absurdity by claiming that the Iranian physician who entered the airliner at Mashhad paved the way for more hijackers to board the plane.

Commentary Examines U.S. Presence in Gulf

LD241330 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1057 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Station commentary: "The Military Presence of the United States and Its Implications"]

[Text] Only a few days have passed since the U.S. crimes against the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf were committed, yet the Washington authorities confess to the great mistake of the Reagan administration in expressing their views; they do so by paying attention to the devastating blows Islam's fighters have dealt in response to this crime. This plot was definitely planned to support the warmongering Iraqi regime, as well as to hide the victories of the fighters of Islam in northwestern Iraq. It is a plot the Reagan administration, with the help of Arab reactionaries, has dreamt up in an effort to prevent the collapse of Saddam's tottering regime in whatever way possible. It is also a plot intended to overshadow the barbaric crimes of the Iraqi regime, during one of which more than 5,000 women and children were martyred through the chemical bombing of Halabjah.

Yet the recent U.S. plot in the Persian Gulf not only was in support of the Iraqi regime in that country's war against Islamic Iran, but also to increase tension in this sensitive world region.

The recent U.S. crime in the Persian Gulf—in which the nonmilitary oil platforms of Iran were attacked—was a blatant violation of recognized international laws on the necessity of nonaggression against the rights of other countries. On the other hand, this criminal act violates Article 5 of Security Council Resolution No 598 in which other noncombatants have been asked to show utmost

restraint in order to decrease tension and expansion of the crisis. Such a requirement is intended to strengthen the implementation of the resolution.

In connection with this point, Javier Perez de Cuellar, the UN secretary general, in a meeting with the Iranian envoy to the United Nations, has condemned the renewed Iraqi use of chemical weapons. In this meeting the UN secretary general also described recent U.S. military attacks against Iranian interests in the Persian Gulf as an infringement of Article 5 of Security Council Resolution No 598.

A glance at the provocative U.S. acts in the Persian Gulf raises a serious question: What is the U.S. objective in creating these confrontations in the Persian Gulf?

One can find a suitable answer to the question of the U.S. military presence in the area by paying attention to Ronald Reagan's weekly radio broadcast. Using threats and intimidation, he has invited the leaders of the Islamic Republic to negotiate with the aggressor Iraqi regime. He says that refusal to negotiate with the Ba'thist Iraqi regime will cost Iranians dearly.

These statements repudiate the views of the U.S. authorities, who justify the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf under the pretext of maintaining the security and freedom of the shipping lanes. These statements also remove the U.S. mask of neutrality in the Iran-Iraq war. They demonstrate the mischievous and aggressive characteristics of the United States, exposing the fact, more than at any other time, that the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf is intended to force the Islamic Republic of Iran into a compromise, as well as to create permanent tensions in the Persian Gulf.

The military presence of the United States and other NATO countries has added to tension and insecurity in the waters of the Persian Gulf. This stems from the fact that the NATO forces have no objective but to create insecurity in the region. It shows that the aim of their mission is to expand insecurity in the Persian Gulf and frustrate the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, their claims that they are maintaining the security of the region's waterways are unfounded and empty.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly stressed the need to maintain the security of the Persian Gulf region. It believes that the regional countries are the real guardians of security in the Persian Gulf. Since the very beginning of the imposed war Iran has explicitly said that the security of the Persian Gulf is necessary and that it will make a consistent and persistent effort to maintain security in the region. Iran has confrontedn any irresponsible measure that could lead to insecurity in the region. Most obviously, the response to the recent U.S. crime in the Persian Gulf will not be the last of such efforts.

As in the past, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its efforts to maintain security in the Persian Gulf. It will continue to confront all the conspiracies the Great Satan, members of NATO, and Arab reactionaries may design. If it decides that the security and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf are being overlooked, it will accept security for none. Then the region will be turned into a vortex of fire and blood, and such conditions will not be in the interests of the security and peace of the region or the world.

U.S. Acts May Cause 'Explosion' in Region

LD251416 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1058 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Following reports about the possibility of increasing the scope of U.S. military operations in the Persian Gulf and about Washington's military support for Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti vessels, this past Saturday Reagan once again gave new dimensions to Washington's overt support for Saddam. He explicitly said that if the Iranian nation continues its attacks on noncombatant ships and its resistance to and rejection of peace negotiations and discussions, it will pay a high price.

In the meantime, a number of U.S. officials have explicitly said that the Reagan administration is—for the purpose of reinforcing the military forces stationed in the Persian Gulf—studying a plan for the dispatch of the U.S. Coast Guard to the Persian Gulf and that, recently, meetings and discussions have been held in this connection. In addition, many U.S. military sources have not denied the suggestion that the possibility of expanding the scope of military protection for ships is under consideration. They have even openly admitted this fact.

At any rate, the Reagan administration's recent posturing and Washington's recent inflammatory acts in the Persian Gulf clearly underscore the fact that the Reagan administration plans to put pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran and increase its support to the Iraqi regime in order to impose a U.S.-style peace on the Iranian nation and to maintain the Iraqi regime. This is done to such a point that despite the constant insistence of Saddam's regime on attacking tankers and creating tension and instability in the Persian Gulf, the Reagan administration is in the process of examining plans whose implementation will, in addition to leaving Iraq's hand free to attack tankers, impose the greatest number of limitations on the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is particularly true because with the recent developments in the Al-Faw region, the Iraqi regime will probably try to pursue its wicked acts with greater scope than in the past 2 years. The Islamic Republic of Iran, since the commencement of Iraqi wickedness in the Persian Gulf and the targeting of oil platforms and merchant ships,

has repeatedly stressed the need for ending these disturbances as soon as possible and for creating a lasting peace and security, mainly by the countries of this region themselves.

However, the practical response of the Reagan administration and its European allies has only led to the increased arming and strengthening of the Iraqi regime in order that it could continue and expand its mischievious acts. The dispatch of French Exocet missiles and Super Etendard jets to Baghdad are specific results of that policy. In line with this policy, the Reagan administration, after a long period of Iraq's inflammatory acts in the Persian Gulf, using the excuse of providing security for tankers and for international waters, gathered together a considerable number of its warships and implemented the plan for escorting 11 Kuwaiti ships with the consent of Britain and France. Several months have passed since the implementation of that plan and now the U.S. Government has decided to extend the scope of this military support beyond that of the Iraqi regime's clear allies and to expand it to a level greater than before. This is happening under circumstances in which the level of tension and disturbance has not only not declined since the arrival of U.S. and European forces in the Persian Gulf region, but, according to published figures, has increased to an unprecedented level. The Reagan administration's war-mongering acts have even, in some instances, advanced to the very edge of inducing an all-encompassing clash and the explosion of the entire region.

Therefore, it is very evident that the broadening of the scope of the plan for the protection of Kuwaiti ships and the possible arrival of U.S. Coast Guards will not only not lead to the reduction of tension and insecurity, but will increase more then ever the possibility of the occurence of an all-encompassing clash and the explosion of the entire region.

Tehran English on War of Cities, U.S. 'Enemy'

LD252143 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Station commentary: "Iraq Preparing for Renewal of City Wars"]

[Text] Since last Wednesday when the city wars between Iran and Iraq were temporarily halted with the last missile and bomb attacks launched by the Iraqi regime so far four villages located in south Iran have been chemically bombed by the aircraft of the Iraqi regime and their frequent sorties over some of the Iranian cities have continued. Meanwhile, announcing the alleged shelling of Darband-e Khan city by Iran, Baghdad has been attempting to keep the issue of the city wars among the war developments by bringing up some pretext for the renewal of its attacks of residential quarters of Iran. Also 3 days ago, the Iraqi military spokesman had claimed that Iran launched a missile attack against Al-Qurnah city. However, the Iraqi regime did not make any endeavor to get this claim established by international circles.

The fact that Iraq rejects any cease-fire in the city wars to keep civilians immune from the damage inflicted by war has become crystal clear for all the political observers in the world. In the course of the 8-year-long war and in over four phases of intensification in the city wars, Iraq has always been the violator of the cease-fire and the reinitiator of the city wars.

The last time when Iraq sought a pretext for renewing the city wars it considered the cities of Halabjah and Darband-e Khan as its pretext. Not long after the Iraqi regime's attacks against the residential areas of Iran, late March this year under the claim of responding to the barrage of its two cities, namely Darband-e Khan and Halabjah, yet by chemically bombing Halabjah created one of the most horrible catastrophies in the recent century.

At present time, it seems that the city of Darband-e Khan is also in danger of a fate similar to that of Halabjah. Ironically enough, massacre of over 5,000 innocent people of Halabjah by the Iraqi regime was the result of the support extended by that regime to the people of Halabjah. The latest claim set forth by Iraq indicating the barrage of the Iraqi city of Darband-e Khan by Iran also depicts the preliminaries for repeating the same ominous crimes. Yet coming days, particularly due to the blatant support extended by the American forces in the Persian Gulf to the Iraqi regime, will show a clear image of the renewal of Iraqi attacks against the residential regions of Iran. Hence, the future days will not be surprising for anyone especially the Iranian people. The complexion of Iranian cities has already changed in an obvious way. The people are preparing themselves to face the conditions far worse than what the Iraqi regime has provided. Since the last aggression by the American naval fleet against the Iranian oil platforms and the clash of the Islamic Republic of Iran's naval force with America, the Iraqi regime is no more recognized as the major enemy.

At the moment the Ba'thist regime ruling over Baghdad is only a small part of the greater enemy which is easily provided a far stronger motive for the Iranian people's struggle against their enemies, a motive which will erase many of the existing observations and stumbling blocks in the way of the Iranian people. Perhaps the prediction of this issue as to what will exactly happen might not be possible. But we would easily and to a great extent to [word indistinct] the final choice of people and the Islamic Revolution vis-a-vis the dilemma of prosperity and meanness.

UN Envoy Calls for Chemical Weapons Probe

LD231209 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The UN secretary general has once again condemned the Zionist Iraqi regime's use of chemical weapons. This is the subject of our latest news report:

[Words indistinct] the UN secretary general has expressed strong anxiety about the renewed use of chemical weapons by Iraq. He stressed that Iraq's actions seriously confound all his efforts with regard to the imposed war. He also stressed that the recent U.S. attack directly violated Article 5 of Security Council Resolution 598. He expressed the hope that the United States would refrain from such acts in the future.

At the same meeting [as heard], Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati, the Islamic Republic of Iran's representative at the United Nations, as well as asking for the dispatch of a UN expert delegation to the region where Iraq used chemical weapons, has submitted a note to the UN secretary general in connection with the renewed use of such weapons against our country's civilian areas. He also met and conferred with some members of the Security Council. He discussed with them the use of chemical weapons and U.S. aggression in the Persian Gulf.

Our country's representative at the United Nations has informed the UN secretary general and members of the Security Council that, although the report of the UN delegation investigating the use of chemical weapons by Iraq in Halabjah, and the resulting human casualties, has not yet been published, the aggressor Iraqi regime has resumed extensive use of chemical weapons against civilian areas with two principal aims: first, to undermine the work of the recently dispatched delegation; second, to defeat once and for all the proposal and efforts of the secretary general to achieve a comprehensive solution. He said: Undoubtedly, the Security Council's silence in connection with Iraq's crimes, which are, in the main, the result of U.S. vetoes in the Security Council, has encouraged Iraq in the pursuit of these inhumane and aggressive aims. He added: For quite some time the Islamic Republic of Iran has predicted the world-wide dangers of the quantitative and qualitative expansion of war crimes and of Iraq's violation of international law, and it has given the necessary warnings to the UN secretary general. Unfortunately, the inaction of that organization has consistently left the path open to Iraq.

Addressing the secretary general, Mahallati added: We request the renewed and immediate despatch of a UN expert delegation in order to investigate the resumed use of chemical weapons by Iraq, and we hope that this time the secretary general will act without delay or hesitation. We must reiterate at the same time that Iraq's increasing use of chemical weapons, and the weak and ineffective reaction of the United Nations has created yet another worthless round to the advantage of Iraq and against the international community. This situation has lasted since 1984, that is, since the dispatch of the first UN expert delegation to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He asked the secretary general to clarify the designated duties of the secretary general and the Security Council in the face of this great international crime so as to preclude any chance of delay or hesitation in the Security Council. He expressed the hope that the next UN delegation to the areas in whcih chemical weapons were used will include all the necessary experts for preparing a comprehensive report.

He also analyzed the explosive situation of the Persian Gulf, the outcome of the recent U.S. aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran's oil platforms. He reminded the secretary general that the mere expression of dismay is not enough, and that the United Nations must do something decisive and practical to punish and prevent such acts of aggression.

Combat Operations in War With Iraq Continue

Iraqi Claim Denied

LD231758 Tehran IRNA in English 1739 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters (WIH) categorically refuted Iraqi allegations that Iranian artillery shelled civilian areas of Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-e Khan in northeastern Iraq.

The WIH spokesman said, the world has witnessed during the different stages of the so-called war of cities that Iran's operations were only of a defensive nature and in response to the enemy's crimes. "The fact that each time it was the Iraqi regime which initated attacks on Iranian civilians areas is crystal clear," he added.

Fallacy of Baghdad's allegations concerning Iran's attack on housing quarters of Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-e Khan is at least clearly obvious for the people of these two Iraqi towns, he said.

The spokesman said the Ba'thist regime resorts to such "baseless and totally false claims" whenever it intends to resume its satanic acts on civilians.

Toxic Gas Injures Villagers

LD241243 Tehran IRNA in English 1055 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., April 24, IRNA—Iraq's chemical bombardment of two villages of Huwayshnes and Sayar [placenames as received] near Huwayzah last Thursday afternoon as injured 98 persons.

Iraqi planes dropped 18 chemical bombs over the region and those villagers who dived into Karkheh Nur River [spelling as received] suffered less as a result of the poisonous chemicals.

An anti-chemical squad of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps rushed to the area to help the victims, but nine of its members were crippled because of exposure to the chemicals.

Most of the victims in the two villages, only four kilometers apart are reportedly suffering from dizziness, nausea and respiratory problems.

Meanwhile the Iraqi planes on the same day chemically bombed the villages Shammariyeh and Safheh near Ahvaz claiming a heavy toll among villagers. Those injured were transferred to hospitals.

The two villages lie 30 kms from Avhaz-Khorramshahr road at the banks of the River Karun [spelling as received].

Kurds Smash 2 Iraqi Attacks

LD241821 Tehran IRNA in English 1727 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] Bakhtaran, April 24, IRNA—Mujahidin of the Badr Division 9, affiliated to the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) smashed two Iraqi attacks in Garmian region, Kirkuk Province on April 19, inflicting heavy casualties and losses on Ba'thist troops.

Iraqi infantry troops backed by helicopter gunships and tanks attacked positions of Iraqi mujahidin in Garmian reigon last Tuesday but were forced to flee while sustaining heavy casualties by the mujahidin.

Ba'thist commandos also tried to recapture Garmian region in the afternoon of the same day but miserably failed and were forced to beat retreat, leaving behind several casualties.

The body of the commander of the Iraqi commando forces was seen among the killed. Several Iraqi troops were also captured by the personnel of the Badr Division 9.

Communique No 3,183

LD251557 Tehran IRNA in English 1534 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—The Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out its routine reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman Sunday, providing air cover for the Navy, said a military communique here Monday.

In its 3183rd communique, the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces reported that Iranian naval forces decisively carried out patrol missions in territorial and international waters in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman Sunday.

On the war fronts, Iran's Muslim forces traded artillery and mortar with Iraqi troops throughout the battlefields Sunday, killing or wounding a number of enemy soldiers and destroying several gun emplacements and a munitions dump of theirs.

An enemy plane attempting to approach the airspace of Lavan Island in the Persian Gulf Sunday was forced to flee by heavy Iranian anti-aircraft fire.

A number of Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and several enemy bunkers set ablaze in parts of the southern and western sectors in artillery duels with Iranian Gendarmerie forces Sunday, concluded the communique.

Pakistan

UN Group To Monitor Geneva Accord Arrives

BK251651 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] The United Nations implementation assistance group has arrived in Islamabad to monitor the Geneva accord. This group, comprised of political and legal advisers and military officers, is led by Major General (Helmanin) from Finland.

The group met with the foreign secretary and other officers of the Foreign Office and exchanged views on the group's task strategy and on setting up its office in Islamabad.

This group will go to Kabul after talks in Islamabad. It will establish its headquarters in Islamabad and Kabul. Major General Helmanin will discharge his duties as the assistant to the UN secretary general's special representative, Mr Diego Cordovez.

Editorial Refutes Indian Allegations on Punjab

BK241413 Lahore JANG in Urdu 11 Apr 88 p 10

[Editorial: "The Basis of Indian Allegations"]

[Text] India's rulers always see Pakistan's hand whenever they encounter political chaos in their country. Instead of reviewing their incorrect policies and positions, they put the entire blame on Pakistan and repeat the allegations in such a manner that a mist of misrepresentation gradually engulfs the truth. However, this darkness cannot cover even the slightest ray of light.

The Indian authorities have long accused Pakistan of assisting the Sikh terrorists. Emulating their pattern, the chief of the Akali Dal-Master Tara Singh group, Rachpal Singh, is now playing the same tune, saying that Pakistan is sending its people to Indian Punjab.

Furthermore, in his own conventional style, he urged the Indian Government to take strong steps against Pakistan for its involvement in the Punjab trouble.

The language and tone of these remarks indicate how the Indian authorities are suffering on account of their wrong decisions in the past. So far as the allegations of Pakistan's assistance to Sikh terrorists are concerned, Pakistan has refuted them at every level.

However, the incessant repetition of blatant lies gives them an aura of truth. Be that as it may be, lies are lies and they are bound to be exposed. While on the one hand, Pakistan is being accused of fanning Sikh unrest in Indian Punjab, on the other, the chief of the Indian paramilitary forces, Sarbjit Singh Werke, in a statement said: "I do not have any proof of Pakistan's involvement in Sikh extremism."

The statement can be viewed as truthful coming from a straightforward person and it shows that Indian rulers and authorities are baselessly involving Pakistan in the Sikh issue, knowing full well that there is no truth to these allegations.

Briefs

Oil, Gas Discovered

Oil and gas have been discovered at four different places in Sind. The new discoveries would yield 7,000 barrels of oil and about 11 million cubic feet of gas per day. The minister of state for petroleum and natural resources, Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan, told the news conference in Islamabad today that with the new discovery the country would be able to met half of its requirements from domestic resources. He said steps were underway for setting up a new refinery to process oil in view of increased production. [Text] [*BK261113 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 26 Apr 88*]